



Some Yemenis protest draft constitution

SANAA (AP) — Tens of thousands of Yemenis thronged the streets of this capital Sunday to protest the draft constitution because it stops short of making Islam the sole source of legislation. They came from all over the provinces, presenting what looked like the largest rally ever in this newly united country. Diplomats estimated the crowd at 100,000. It was a tangible symbol of the government's first major test in trying to allay the lingering suspicions in the year-old union between the formerly Marxist south and the more religious, conservative north. Government officials have said the fundamentalist rallies are part of a democratic process in a country which has seen 33 parties sprout since unity paved the way for the multi-party system. The constitution is expected to pass. Mainly bearded, the demonstrators marched through the streets chanting "an Islamic constitution," and gathered in parade square to listen to fiery speeches. No women were sighted in their midst and there were no incidents with the police, who helped clear the roads for them.

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U.S. soldier, Iraqi civilian killed

ZAKHO (R) — A U.S. soldier and an Iraqi civilian were killed Sunday when their trucks collided on a main road to the northern provincial capital of Dohuk. U.S. military sources said. Two other American soldiers were injured in the crash of a U.S. army truck and an Iraqi pick-up about 50 kilometres northwest of Dohuk. Two U.S. army soldiers were seriously injured Sunday in another accident just south of the allied supply base near the Turkish border town of Silopi, a U.S. military statement said. It said the soldiers were in a fuel truck which turned over and caught fire after swerving to avoid a civilian car. The two men suffered extensive burns.

1 killed, 12 hurt in Kabul rocket attacks

ISLAMABAD (R) — Guerrillas fighting the Soviet-backed government in Afghanistan fired 12 rockets into the capital Kabul Sunday, killing one person and wounding 12. Kabul Radio said. The broadcast, monitored in the Pakistani capital Islamabad, said the Western-backed rebels fired what it called cluster rockets from north-west of Kabul. Four districts were damaged by the rockets. The rebels have frequently fired rockets on Kabul during the 12-year-old civil war.

400 mines still in northern Gulf

BAHRAIN (R) — Western and Arab navies have cleared about 800 Iraqi mines from the northern Gulf but more than 400 are still lurking there, a British naval officer said Sunday. "We think the Iraqis laid something between 1,200 and 1,300 mines in total," Commander Christopher Craig told a news conference. "At the latest count there are approximately 800 mines cleared and the rest are being cleared." Cmdr. Craig said the remaining mines were located nearly 30 miles off the Kuwaiti coast. "I have every confidence that mine clearance will be completed within a period of several weeks." Britain still has five mine-clearing vessels operating in the northern Gulf. The U.S., Saudi and French navies are also taking part in the operation.

Ozal attacks Hawke on human rights

SYDNEY (R) — Turkish President Turgut Ozal, who ended a trip to Australia Saturday, has criticised Prime Minister Bob Hawke over human rights, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) reported Sunday. Mr. Ozal said Australia should look after its own human rights record before criticising Turkey. ABC Radio reported, quoting Turkish newspaper reports. Mr. Hawke last week made Mr. Ozal an honorary member of the Order of Australia, the nation's top honour, but also raised questions about Turkey's human rights record. Mr. Ozal's office alleged that 96 people committed suicide each year in Australian prisons due to torture and repression. The ABC quoted the newspapers as reporting. Such a country did not have the right to criticise Turkey, Mr. Ozal was reported as saying. A spokesman for Mr. Hawke could not be reached for comment on the reports. Mr. Ozal left Australia on Saturday after a visit marked by angry protests about Turkey's human rights record and its occupation of northern Cyprus.

Group appeals for release of hostage

LONDON (AP) — A group backing the release of British journalist John McCarthy appealed Sunday for the release of Jack Mann, a 76-year-old Briton, beginning his third year in captivity in Beirut. Mr. Mann was kidnapped on May 12, 1989. His abduction was never claimed by any group, although he is believed to be among the Westerners held by pro-Iranian factions. "The friends of John McCarthy wish to ensure that Jack Mann, together with John, Terry Waite and all other hostages, is not forgotten as he enters his third year of incarceration."

Superpowers link up on Mideast peace effort amid signs of trouble

CAIRO (Agencies) — U.S. and Soviet foreign ministers began talks in Egypt on Sunday in a joint effort to get Arab-Israeli peace talks launched amid signs that the American-led move had run into trouble.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker flew in from Damascus, where he met Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

Mr. Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh talked in one of Cairo's Nile-side luxury hotels ahead of more discussions on Monday with Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak.

But there was no sign that Syria or Israel was prepared to make concessions to bridge the Arab-Israeli divide.

Mr. Assad's spokesman told Reuters the Syrian leader and Mr. Baker agreed after six hours of talks that Damascus and Washington would continue to exchange contacts and ideas (see story on right).

A senior official travelling with

Mr. Baker from Damascus to Cairo said Syria and Israel were as far apart as ever on two central procedural issues — whether the United Nations should attend the peace conference and whether the conference should be a one-off event or should reconvene from time to time.

"On those two issues I don't see any particular progress," the official said bluntly after Mr. Baker's latest marathon session with Mr. Assad, which lasted more than six hours.

He was equally pessimistic about Mr. Baker's prospects of finding a more receptive response from Israel's headline Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir when the two met next Wednesday.

"I don't expect to see any progress on those two issues when I get to (occupied) Jerusalem. We may get lucky. But at the end of this trip we will know exactly what separates the parties and then we will determine what the next steps are," the official said.

It was a clear signal that the peace initiative had run into serious trouble.

Mr. Baker has been adamant that he would not continue his mission if the parties themselves did not demonstrate a will to overcome problems in the search for peace.

Asked why Mr. Baker did not return to Washington straight away, the official said: "There are other things that can still be done usefully and in terms of why we don't fly straight back to Washington, we've got appointments that I think would be dishonourable not to keep."

The sombre mood in the Baker party on Sunday contrasted with the optimism with which it greeted Saturday's news that Saudi Arabia and its five allies in the Gulf Cooperation Council were willing to send an observer to any peace conference.

Mr. Baker had hoped this development would produce more

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Shamir vows not to return land; aide dismisses GCC offer

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir vowed never to surrender land for peace, and a top aide dismissed as useless the Gulf states' agreement to send an observer to proposed Middle East peace talks.

Mr. Shamir's remarks came as Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker were both in the Mideast trying to arrange negotiations.

"We will not retreat and we will mobilise every drop of desire, energy, and capability to stand up for our rights to the land of Israel," Mr. Shamir said in remarks broadcast Sunday. "There is no Israel other than the entire land of Israel, all of it is holy."

Mr. Shamir's ruling Likud bloc believes that the "land of Israel" should stretch from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, and has repeatedly said it would not agree to a U.S.-supported land for peace settlement with the Arabs.

The top aide to Mr. Shamir Sunday dismissed an offer by six

observer to a proposed Middle East conference, saying they were ignoring the need to make peace.

The negative reaction from Yossi Ben-Aharon contrasted to cautious praise from Foreign Minister David Levy, who has been increasingly out of step with the prime minister's tough stand.

"In a status of observers, there is no tangible contribution to the peace process because they maintain a state of war with us," said Mr. Ben-Aharon, director of Mr. Shamir's office.

"We don't need observers as far as the Arab states are concerned. We need participants," he told reporters.

The United States welcomed the offer on Saturday by the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to join the talks as an observer.

"But if they are maintaining the state of war and the boycott and supporting the PLO and the Syrian arms deals and the rest, we don't see any positive contribution on their part to the peace process," Mr. Ben-Aharon said.

Mr. Levy, taking a softer line

than most in government, said he awaited official word of the move but it seemed to be progress.

"It seems to me that a week ago many sources were saying that the process had shrunk to one Arab state. Here now there are signs of more states," he said.

Mr. Ben-Aharon denied that sitting at the same table with the GCC secretary-general as an observer represented the Gulf states' acceptance of Israel as a legitimate state.

"If it is, we would be more than happy to hear them say it. They recognise Israel and end the state of war between us, then 'ahlan wasahlan' as we say in the Middle East," he said.

Mr. Ben-Aharon said Arabs and Israelis already sat together at the United Nations and other international forums.

The GCC also announced it was willing to engage individually in negotiations with Israel over arms control, water resources and the environment.

Mr. Ben-Aharon said Israel would accept their participation

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Kurdish leader is confident autonomy accord achievable

BAGHDAD (R) — Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani said Sunday he was confident of reaching early agreement with the Iraqi government on autonomy for Iraq's 3.5 million Kurds.

"I am sure we will have an agreement," he told Reuters.

Asked when, he replied: "Not today. Maybe during this week." Mr. Barzani, leader of the powerful Kurdish Democratic Party, is in Baghdad at the head of a four-member delegation of guerrilla chiefs to work out a new autonomy deal for the Kurds who make up about one fifth of Iraq's 18 million people.

He met President Saddam Hussein on Saturday for the second time since the peace talks began on Tuesday but the Kurdish leader would not say what was exactly under discussion.

"Later, later we will give you everything," Mr. Barzani said when asked for details.

Massoud Barzani inherited his father's mantle as the supreme Kurdish chieftain in Iraq when Mulla Mustafa Barzani died in 1979 after decades of leading the Kurds' on-off war with the Baghdad government.

His meetings with President Saddam have raised hopes of a breakthrough which could pave the way for the return of the latest wave of Kurdish refugees to their homes in northern Iraq. About two million Kurds fled to Iraq and Turkey following a

rebellion ended by the army at the end of March.

But a few thousand have since trickled back to "safe havens" set in north Iraq up by a U.S.-led alliance which fought the Iraqi army in the Gulf war last February.

Baghdad has condemned the allied-protected refugee enclave as a violation of its territory.

Kurdish sources outside Iraq say Baghdad was keen to clinch an early deal with the rebels which could undermine the justification for the allied military presence in northern Iraq.

A Kurdish newspaper said at the weekend the autonomy talks were about to bear fruit.

Breaking days of official silence on the talks, the newspaper Al Iraq said on Saturday they were going ahead "in an objective spirit and the discussions were full and frank."

"The result of the negotiations is expected to be announced in a couple of days in the framework of a mutual agreement on how to implement the March (1970) declaration which will strengthen national unity," it said.

A first round of talks two weeks ago led to agreement in principle to revive the 1970 accord, which recognised the Kurds as a distinct nation and gave them extensive rights to run their own local affairs. Kurdish leaders have accused Baghdad of reneging on the 1970 deal.

Exile Kurds say the Kurdish negotiators in Baghdad wanted international safeguards for any new accord. They also want access to oil revenues from oilfields around the northern city of Kirkuk where they traditionally made up a majority of the population. The fields accounts for a quarter of Iraq's pre-Gulf war oil production of about three million barrels per day.

Iraqi officials have expressed reservations about these Kurdish demands.

The United Nations will begin relief operations in the provincial capital of Dohuk Monday even though Kurdish refugees say they won't go back unless they are protected by Western troops.

U.S. military spokesman Captain Joe Woodbury told reporters in Silopi that the first U.N. convoy of food supplies would travel to Dohuk, in northern Iraq, Monday.

"I assume there won't be any problems," Capt. Woodbury said, but added: "We are disappointed. We hoped there would be a refugee convoy, too (travelling to Dohuk)."

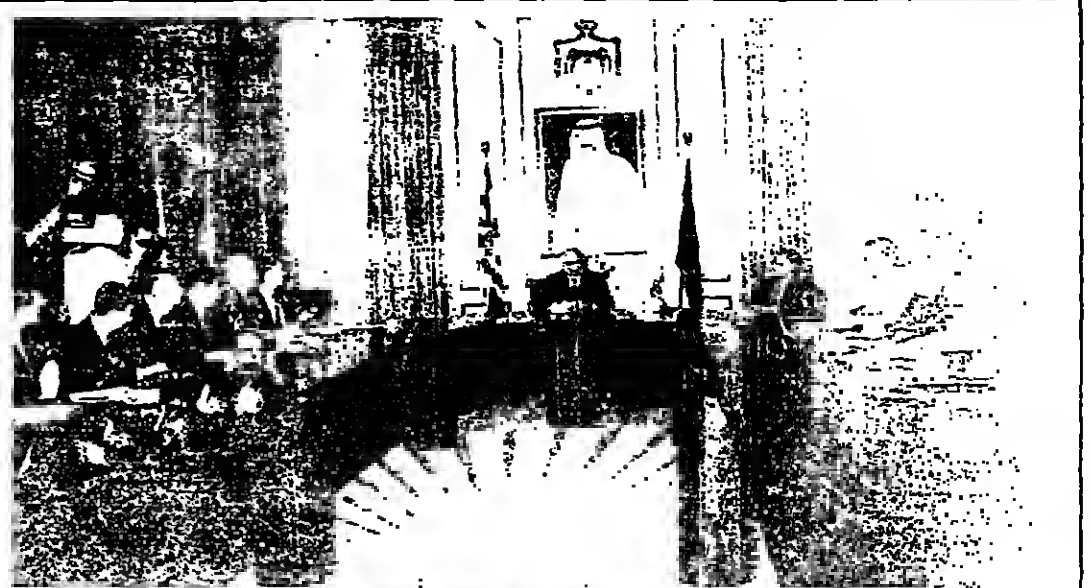
Relief agencies and allied military leaders hope a U.N. presence will entice Kurds back to Dohuk. The West wants the world body to take over the camps eventually.

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King meets American student delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday met with a student delegation representing the U.S. National War College led by Dr. Terry Daibel and reviewed with the guests developments in the Middle East and the impact of the Gulf war on the region.

The King also reviewed with the delegation efforts towards ending the Arab-Israeli conflict and stressed the need for establishing security and stability in the region through a just and comprehensive settlement. The meeting was attended by Royal Court Chief Sharif



His Majesty King Hussein Sunday meets with an American student delegation (Petra photo). Zeid Ben Shaker, Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Taleb and the King's military secretary as well as U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Roger Harrison. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan also received the U.S. delegation and reviewed with them the situation in the region in general, and the Arab-Israeli conflict and Jordan's stand on the issue.

Syria firm on 242 and 338

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad told U.S. Secretary of State James Baker that Damascus was ready to continue working with Washington towards Middle East peace, his spokesman said Sunday.

Joubran Kourieh told Reuters the Syrian leader and Mr. Baker agreed after six hours of talks that Damascus and Washington would continue to exchange contacts and ideas.

Mr. Baker left for Cairo immediately after his talks with President Assad to meet Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh, who has joined U.S. efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"President Assad reiterated Syria's real desire to establish a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with U.N. resolutions, especially 242 and 338," Mr. Kourieh said.

"He also reaffirmed the continuation of Syria's readiness to cooperate with current efforts to achieve the best formula that would push forward the peace process."

"The Syrian and American sides agreed to continue contacts and discussion of ideas raised," Mr. Kourieh said.

Mr. Kourieh said Mr. Baker had brought President Assad up to date with his efforts to move the peace process forward.

"Baker briefed President Assad on the contacts conducted by the United States with the parties concerned and the contacts to be conducted," he added.

The talks in Syria came after Mr. Baker announced the breaking of a "major taboo" frustrating peace efforts.

The six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has agreed to deal directly with Israel for the first time on secondary regional issues such as water scarcity and to send an emissary to observe the opening of peace talks with other Arab states if they occur.

Those Arab countries had previously shied away from involvement in peace talks, although they are not yet pledged to talk peace with Israel.

Syrian radio accused Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of "wanting to foil the present chance to reach peace."

Earlier Sunday, Mr. Shamir vowed never to surrender the occupied territories.

Exchange of at least much of that territory for peace is the heart of U.S., U.N., European and Arab peace proposals.

"We will not retreat and we will mobilise every drop of desire, energy, and capability to stand up for our rights to the land of Israel," Mr. Shamir said. Damascus Radio said the major powers have no choice "other than to make it clear that those who do not respect international law and the will of the interna-

Jordan seeks fresh negotiations with France on Mirage deal

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan has requested France for fresh negotiations on an already agreed deal to sell Mirage 2000 fighter jets to the Kingdom, French Defence Minister Pierre Joxe said Sunday.

Mr. Joxe, who arrived here Saturday, also told a press conference after talks with His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan that France had agreed to supply spare parts for the Mirage jets the Kingdom already possesses.

"The Jordanian government has requested that discussions be resumed on this issue (sale of Mirage 2000 jets) and talks are continuing on this request," the French minister said.

Asked whether France had agreed to supply spare parts for the Mirage jets already with the Royal Jordanian Air Force, Mr. Joxe replied "yes" without elaboration.

Informed sources said Jordan and France had already reached agreement for a new deal involving Mirage 2000 jets, but in view of the financial situation of the Kingdom, Amman was seeking fresh payment terms and related conditions.

Mr. Joxe, who is visiting Jordan in response to an invitation that the King extended during a visit to France in early April, said he also toured a Royal Jordanian Air Force base and met with senior officials.

The King met with the French minister on Saturday and re-

viewed with him "military cooperation and relations between the two countries," the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

On Sunday, Crown Prince Hassan held talks with Mr. Joxe on "post-war cooperation" between Jordan and France, the agency said.

Mr. Joxe told reporters that his country had reached agreement with Kuwait to "assign a group of French military personnel to train Kuwaitis in clearing mines."

Spokesmen for the American-led alliance which fought Iraq in the Gulf war earlier this year have said that hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of landmines litter Kuwait and that clearing the explosive devices could take a

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Settlers wound 2 Arab girls; court rejects expulsion appeal

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Jewish settlers shot and wounded two Palestinian girls aged four and five near occupied Jerusalem on Sunday as Israelis marked the 24th anniversary of the seizure of the half of the Holy City.

The settlers, from the Jewish community of Shiloh in the occupied West Bank, told police they opened fire when an Arab minibus tried to force their bus off the road just north of occupied Jerusalem near the village of Arram.

The girls riding in the minibus were wounded in the legs. One was treated and released. The other was kept in hospital but police said she was not in danger.

Police said they detained the settlers and their bus driver for questioning.

The incident occurred as Jews converged on occupied Jerusalem

to mark the seizure of the eastern half of the Holy City in the 1967 war.

The "anniversary" was on Sunday according to the Jewish calendar but is June 7 by the Western calendar.

Palestinians from the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank were barred from Jerusalem in an effort to prevent unrest.

Two pipe bombs exploded in the occupied Jerusalem neighbourhood of Ramot, one of a string of Jewish neighbourhoods built by Israel in Arab Jerusalem since 1967, but caused no injuries or damage.

Police said earlier that members of a group affiliated to the Palestine Liberation Organisation's mainstream Fatah movement had been arrested in Arab Jerusalem on suspicion of planting bombs in the past year.

Thousands of police were on hand in occupied Jerusalem as Israelis marched through the city to the Western Wall.

A three-judge Israeli supreme court panel Sunday rejected appeals by four Palestinian refugees against army orders to expel them from the occupied Gaza Strip.

The U.S. has been pressuring Israel to stop expulsions as a gesture towards peace, and the decision came as U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was on his fourth Middle East shuttle trying to organise Arab-Israeli negotiations.

Spokeswoman Eti Eshed said the judges saw no reason to interfere in an army decision to expel the four Gazans for allegedly inciting violence and being senior

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Zulus go on rampage against ANC, kill 25

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — About 1,000 Zulus armed with spears and clubs rampaged through a squatter camp Sunday, hacking and burning at least 25 people to death as screaming residents ran for their lives.

Police and survivors said the Zulus swarmed through the shantytown at dawn, clubbing and stabbing men and setting fire to about 80 of the wooden and cardboard shacks.

Police said approximately 30 people were injured, but residents said the figure was far higher. Many of the victims were set on fire, police added.

"This is the new South Africa and look how we are dying," sobbed a woman who survived the attack which caught residents as they slept.

The attack, which occurred in the black township of Kagiso outside Johannesburg, was one of the worst in months. It came at a time when the government and the African National Congress (ANC) are deadlocked over chro-

nic fighting in black townships. Elsewhere, police said Sunday that four black men were backed and shot to death overnight near Port Shepstone in Natal Province. No other details were provided.

The black faction fighting pits supporters of the Zulu's Inkatha party against ANC supporters. Both black groups oppose apartheid, but are divided by deep tribal and ideological differences.

Survivors of Sunday's attack said Zulus wearing the red headbands of Inkatha went from house to house hunting down "ANC men."

Meanwhile, Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi said Sunday that South Africa's blacks had to end political violence. He pledged never to use violence and also urged blacks to forgive whites for apartheid.

Mr. Buthelezi, speaking on Sunday at a prayer meeting in the Zulu capital of Ulundi, said he was committing himself to a spirit of forgiveness and repentance.

Bush calls GCC stand 'very encouraging'

ANDREWS AIR BASE, Maryland (R) — President George Bush Sunday welcomed the decision by Saudi Arabia and five other Gulf states to send an observer to a Middle East peace conference.

Speaking to reporters at Andrews air force base on his way to his Camp David retreat in Maryland, Mr. Bush said it was too early to gauge progress towards a possible Israeli-Arab breakthrough.

"But recent statements — the statement out of the Saudis — was very encouraging, very encouraging," he said.

Mr. Bush added that he discussed the Middle East along with "a lot of other matters" with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev during a 45-minute phone call Saturday.

(Continued on page 5)

Iraq busy with reconstruction, but sanctions pose big hurdle

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

The writer has just returned after a week-long visit to Iraq

AMIDST POLITICAL efforts to stabilise the internal situation following the Gulf war and sectarian rebellions in the north and south, the Iraqi government has also stepped up the pace of post-war reconstruction. But, every Iraqi agrees, the push to rebuild the devastated infrastructure could grind to a halt if the international sanctions imposed on the country are not eased.

Engineers and workers are busy in Baghdad and in almost every major town and city in Iraq, tearing down buildings and structures hit in the allied bombing during the war or ransacked and gutted in the Shiite rebellion in the south and the Kurdish riots in the north which followed the end of the war in late February.

In many cases, experts say, reconstruction costs could be double the original cost since demolition of damaged buildings without posing danger to nearby structures is a time-consuming, expensive process. And, of course, prices have gone up since Iraq built the facilities years back.

High-rise cranes and earth-moving equipment are seen in every part of Baghdad, hauling down huge chunks of concrete and masses of steel wreckage. At one site, the main post office in the heart of the Iraqi capital, it was clear that the process was going to be very delicate since three big buildings surround it, limiting equipment manoeuvrability.

But such limitations have not discouraged the Iraqis, who appear to have been encouraged by the swiftness with which the government managed to restore power and water supply and communications in many areas of Baghdad and other towns and cities.

These restorations are in no way complete. In many areas, power supply is erratic and health authorities warn against consuming pipe water without boiling it. Ministries and government departments have

communications among themselves but no external lines are available yet.

But the main boost that the Iraqi psyche received after the initial shock of the war appears to be the relatively fast return to the market of gasoline supplies. The government lifted rationing of fuel on April 28 and a few days later reduced the price to 70 fils a litre. This in turn has led to a small decline in prices, particularly those of produce transported to Baghdad and other cities from outlying areas.

The Iraqi army is contributing a large share of the reconstruction efforts, particularly by offering its expertise in building pontoon bridges and laying detour roads.

The army's role is clearly visible on the main Baghdad-Basra highway, where every bridge has been hit in an unmistakably systematic bombing by the allies. Some of the bridges now allow one-way traffic while army-built pontoons serve vehicles going in the opposite direction.

Several of the bridges, across the Shatt Al Arab waterway — the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers — flowing into the Gulf near Basra, have partially survived the bombing with one lane totally demolished while the other lane remains strong enough to take heavy vehicles.

In Baghdad itself, cranes are at work lifting chunks of steel and concrete from bombed buildings as well as bridges across the Tigris, but the need for makeshift bridges is not felt in the capital since six main bridges somehow escaped the bombing.

"It is not as if the Americans wanted to spare any of the bridges; it is only that they were not very accurate," said a taxi driver, pointing out to a wreckage of buildings adjacent to one of the bridges. "They came back at least two times to

destroy the bridge, but somehow they missed every time and hit the buildings instead," he said.

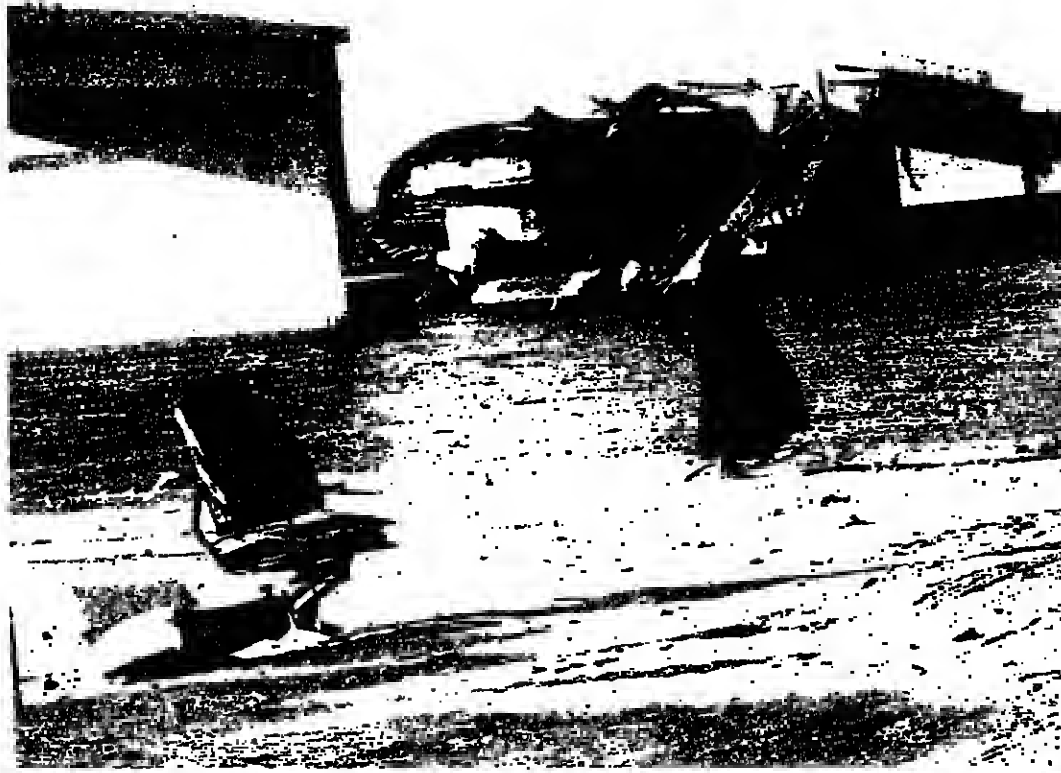
The massive cost of rebuilding has not been estimated accurately yet. But Iraqi ministers and government officials have estimated the total loss sustained in physical damages at between \$150 billion and \$200 billion.

Special emphasis is given to reconstruction in the 1991 national budget of 18.9 billion Iraqi dinars (\$44 billion at the official rate). The budget, which was approved by the government last week, also provides for heavy subsidies on wheat and barley and help for farmers in the fertile northern parts of the country. Funds usually allocated for new projects have been diverted to reconstruction and, as an Iraqi economist put it, "there is little chance of any new government investments for the next few years."

The conversion of several government-owned firms, including a publishing and advertising company, to joint-stock entities, and permission for private banks to be set up are seen as the forerunner of a fundamental change in the mostly socialist economic system of Iraq to deal with the aftermath of the war.

However, as Iraqis are well aware, work on repairing and/or rebuilding key installations such as water purification plants, power generating facilities and telecommunications will come to a halt until the United Nations Sanctions Committee lifts its punitive embargo on Iraq, imposed after the Aug. 2 Iraqi takeover of Kuwait.

"So far the reconstruction and rebuilding work has progressed well since the Iraqis relied upon themselves and drew from local resources for the entire process," said an Asian diplomat. "The work completed so far represents a phase where the groundwork is done, but the crunch will come when they need imported equipment to replace or repair damaged facilities," he noted. Iraqi officials and ordinary



Every bridge on the main Baghdad-Basra highway has been hit in the allied bombing (photo above), and the Iraqi army has built pontoon bridges (below) to resume vehicle and pedestrian traffic. (Photos by P.V. Vivekanand).



citizens are equally bitter over the continued sanctions. "I don't know what they (the allies) want from us anymore," commented a senior ministry

official. "They have already demolished our country and set us back by decades in terms of industrialisation. Kuwait is now free and the sheikhs are

back in power there. What is the justification for the continued sanctions, which, more than anyone else, are hurting the Iraqi people?" he asked.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Bush telephones thanks to King Fahd

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. President George Bush called King Fahd of Saudi Arabia Saturday to thank him for the Gulf Cooperation Council's decision to participate in a regional peace conference on the Middle East. The White House press office said Mr. Bush told the Saudi king he viewed the announcement as a "positive step." The Gulf Cooperation Council, composed of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, announced earlier on Saturday its "readiness to participate — if invited — as an observer" in a forthcoming peace conference. The GCC said participation, by its secretary-general, would be to further efforts "to achieve peace, security and stability in the Middle East... to put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to reach a just solution to the Palestinian question."

Khamenei in satisfactory condition

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was in satisfactory condition Sunday after an operation a day earlier for a longstanding gallbladder problem, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. In an interview broadcast over radio and television, Ayatollah Khamenei said doctors told him he might be hospitalised for a couple of days, according to IRNA. Ayatollah Khamenei, 51, said he was first hospitalised with the problem while imprisoned by the late Shah Mohammad Reza Bahlavi, who was overthrown by the 1979 revolution. He said the problem had recurred, causing a chronic stomach ache. "At first, doctors diagnosed my illness as a gastric ulcer and sometimes as a duodenal ulcer," he said. He said the pain was so severe on April 16 and April 17 that he was unable to lead congregational prayers to celebrate the 'Eid Al Fitr holy days marking the end of Ramadan. Doctors finally diagnosed the problem as gallstones, he said. Ayatollah Khamenei served as Iran's president from 1981 until 1989, when he succeeded his former teacher, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, as Iran's spiritual leader after Ayatollah Khomeini's death. He survived an assassination attempt in June 1981 when a bomb hidden in a tape recorder exploded during a speech. But the incident, blamed on the opposition Mujahideen — e. Khatol, damaged his right arm.

Oman seeks regional effort against rabies

MUSCAT (AP) — The Sultanate of Oman has called for regional efforts to halt the spread of rabies across the southern Arabian Peninsula, a senior national health service spokesman said Saturday. Mohammad Al Buayy, state curative services director, said Oman had called for a meeting of top health officials from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Oman to discuss ways to check the passage of rabid wolves and foxes across borders. He said a boy had died of rabies earlier this year in Oman's northern Ibbi district, and some camels and goats owned by roaming tribes had died.

King Hassan to visit Western Sahara

RABAT (R) — King Hassan of Morocco will visit the Western Sahara next Thursday, the Ministry of the Interior and Information said. The king, who left Rabat Saturday for the southern city of Marrakesh, will spend 46 hours in the disputed territory in the inland town of Smara and surrounding areas. It will be his third visit to the former Spanish colony since Spain pulled out in 1976. Morocco administers the territory, where Polisario guerrillas have been fighting for independence. The United Nations has adopted a plan for a referendum on whether the inhabitants of the region want independence or to be part of Morocco.

Ethiopian rebels claim killing 2,000 troops

LONDON (R) — Ethiopian rebels said Saturday they killed 2,000 government troops when they repulsed two attacks near a strategic Red Sea port. Government forces attempted to retake the town of Beylel, 50 kilometres northwest of the government-held port of Assab, a broadcast by the clandestine radio of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) said. There was no independent confirmation of the report. The radio said rebels wounded 1,700 government soldiers and captured 12 during fighting on May 3-4 and May 8-9.

Kurdish girl run over by U.S. vehicle

ANKARA (R) — A 10-year-old Kurdish girl died after being run over by a water trailer towed by a U.S. marine truck in northern Iraq, a U.S. statement said Sunday. The statement, received from Incirlik base in southern Turkey, said the girl had tried to jump on the water trailer near a refugee camp on Saturday, but fell under the wheels. The girl, who was not named, died later of a cerebral haemorrhage in hospital in the Iraqi border town of Zakho. The U.S. marines belong to a multinational force trying to coax around 400,000 Kurdish refugees to leave squalid camps on the rugged Turkish border for allied-guarded havens inside Iraq.

Iran to start military manoeuvres

NICOSIA (R) — The Iranian navy and air force will hold nine days of sea manoeuvres in the Gulf starting on Wednesday, the Iranian News Agency IRNA said Sunday. The exercises, code-named Victory-2, will be held over 47,000 square kilometres area stretching from Iran's Lavan Island to the Nowruz offshore oil fields in the northern and central parts of the Gulf. Naval units will be assisted by 30 air force jet fighters and several helicopters, said the agency, monitored in Nicosia.

ANNOUNCEMENT ABID SHIBLEY MBE

The British Embassy regrets to announce that Abid Shibley MBE died peacefully in his sleep early on 11 May. The funeral took place on 11 May. Condolences will be received at the family's house in Taha Hussein St. beside the Iraqi Embassy, between 5 and 7 o'clock p.m. on 13 May.

Anti-war tribunal blasts Bush, U.S. military

NEW YORK (R) — The first of a series of worldwide tribunals convened by anti-war activists accused President George Bush and U.S. military leaders Saturday of war crimes against Iraqi civilians.

In a nine-hour forum, dozens of opponents to the Gulf war testified the U.S. government had waged an unjust war against defenceless Iraqi soldiers as well as thousands of innocent women and children.

Led by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who served under President Lyndon Johnson, the inquiry called for impeachment proceedings to begin against Mr. Bush for war crimes.

"It's never happened that a nation (that) has won a war has been held accountable. We intend to make this time different," said Mr. Clark to the 500 people who gathered in a high school auditorium for the proceedings.

The group sponsoring the inquiry, the National Coalition to Stop U.S. Military Intervention in the Middle East, is headquartered in Mr. Clark's New York law office.

Future tribunals are scheduled to be held in other U.S. cities and in Latin America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

The appearance of Mr. Clark before the crowd prompted cheers of "We want Ramsey" and a thundering standing ovation when he urged his supporters to "bring the transgressors to justice."

Charged with 19 war crimes and crimes against humanity by the group were U.S. Vice-President Dan Quayle, Secretary of State James Baker, Defence Secretary Richard Cheney, retiring Central Intelligence Agency

Director William Webster and generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf.

Members of the coalition added their voices to a chorus of outrage at the destruction of Iraq at the hands of American forces. Videotapes of injured children in a Baghdad hospital and bombed neighbourhoods also were shown.

Gabrielle Gemma, who travelled to Baghdad last month on a fact-finding mission as part of the coalition, said she visited the site of a bombed air raid shelter and could "still smell death in the air."

"There are women who still went there everyday who stood at

the gates mourning," she said. The American public, Mr. Gemma said, has been misled by the government and the press about the bombing. "It's a completely residential neighbourhood. People need to know that."

Other testimony included that of Michio Kaku, a professor of nuclear physics, who said the ecological fallout from the war contributed to Mr. Bush and others' guilt. "The victims do not write the history," he said. "The purpose of this inquiry is to make sure the truth comes out."

Mr. Kaku said the temperature has dropped 25 degrees in the region as a result of the clouds of smoke from the still-burning oil well fires.

Mr. Clark accused U.S. forces of using illegal weapons, which he cited as further proof of the government's culpability.

He and others at the hearing urged participants to launch a counterprotest at the June 10 bicentennial parade in New York for returning troops.

The forum's organisers said findings from their own tribunal and others around the world will be sent to the World Court in the Hague.

SLA attacks U.N.-policed village

TYRE, Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli-backed militia attacked a U.N.-policed village in South Lebanon behind a mortar barrage Sunday, wounding two villagers, police said.

They said the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia lit up the pre-dawn sky with 52 parachute flares and pounded the village of Majdal Zoun with 37 mortar rounds before the attack at 5 a.m. (0200 GMT).

The assault was mounted by 12 SLA militiamen. They fired about 4,000 machine gun rounds during their 2.5-hour search of the tiny, 12-house hamlet, according to police.

The Nepalese battalion of the U.N. peacekeeping force known as UNIFIL police Majdal Zoun. Police said they had no word on what provoked the attack or whether the Nepalese were involved in any fighting.

The 3,000-strong SLA controls a border enclave carved out by Israel in gaining buffer against cross-border guerrilla raids.

The 1,100-square-kilometre enclave overlaps with the zone policed by the 5,800 U.N. troops from Ireland, France, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Italy, Fiji, Ghana and Nepal.

U.S. may be ready to end Afghan rebel aid

NEW YORK (R) — The Bush administration has not requested renewed funding of Afghan guerrillas, a sign of recognition that an 11-year policy aimed at overthrowing Afghanistan's Soviet-backed government is outdated. The New York Times reported in its Sunday edition.

Citing senior administration officials, the newspaper said the administration reserved the right to request funds for the programme as the budget process continues over the next two months, and that Congress can still recommend a continuation of the programme on its own.

The Times said some administration officials remain committed to sending funds to the rebels, but that frustration that the policy was outmoded and hard to defend was increasing.

A senior administration official involved in developing the policy was quoted as saying "the administration is tiring of the war," while another said "there is no request for more money."

"It's true that the voices calling for an end to the programme are getting louder and that every year it gets harder and harder to justify assistance in the absence of results," the official said.

President George Bush has repeatedly vowed to continue aid to

the rebels as long as the Soviets continued to aid the Kabul government.

But one senior administration official was quoted as saying, "The continuation of Soviet aid is a key factor, but to say our decision is contingent on a Soviet cutoff is going a little too far."

The paper said the Bush administration is increasingly unhappy with Afghan rebel leaders, some of whom supported Iraq in the Gulf war.

The paper also said aiding the rebels was falling out of favour due to an increasing perception within the administration that the Afghan conflict was a civil war rather than a superpower clash, as well as to the decline of the cold war.

Some officials tried to play down the significance of the failure to request funding for the rebels, the Times said. The officials said it was normal to defer requests that must be submitted secretly to intelligence committees and that there was still time for the administration to request funds.

Last week the House of Representatives Intelligence Committee, which includes some of Congress' staunchest supporters of the rebels, decided to continue funding for fiscal 1992.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman Min./max. temp. 18 / 31
Aqaba 24 / 40
Dahab 19 / 34
Jordan Valley 21 / 37

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Maqas 741444
Dr. Aswar Al Haj 771020
Dr. Abdul Aziz Taboun 783708
Dr. Youssef Sammour 615648
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Fire Brigade 192, 621111, 637777
First pharmacy 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381332
Khalid Maternity J. Amn 6428164
Khalid Maternity J. Amn 6424412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mallus, J. Amman 630140
Palestine, Shmeisani 6641714
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musallam Hospital 6672779
The Islamic, Abdali 66617757
Al-Abi, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Musallam 7710113
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511126
Army, Marka 89161115
Queen Alla Hospital 60224050
Ansal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarga National Hospital (09)991071
Jon Sina Hospital (09)986732
ERBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)775555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)772775
Rai Al Nafes Hospital (02)747100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53220-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:20 Dhahran (RJ)
10:15 Jeddah, Samana (RJ)
10:45 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:00 Laraca, Damascus (RJ)
17:30 Riyadh (RJ)
19:00 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

14:55 Bahrain (GF)
20:55 Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

12:00 Riyadh (RJ)
12:30 Montreal, New York (RJ)
20:45 Beirut, Doha (RJ)
21:30 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jds per kg.

Apple 580 / 500
Banana 500 / 450
Banana (Mukammal) 450 / 400
Beans 520 / 450
Broad beans 380 / 300
Cabbage 130 / 90
Carrot 180 / 130
Cauliflower 220 / 180
Cucumbers (large) 180 / 130
Cucumbers (small) 350 / 320
Eggplant 250 / 200
Garlic 400 / 350
Grapefruit 250 / 200
Lemon 280 / 220
Lettuce (per one) 120 / 80
Marrow (large) 120 / 80
Marrow (small) 200 / 160
Onion (dry) 150 / 120
Onion (green) 260 / 220
Orange 150 / 120
Pepper (hot) 160 / 100
Pepper (sweet) 180 / 120
Potato 240 / 200
Radish 150 / 100
Sage 450 / 350
Tomatoes 350 / 300
Watermelon 300 / 250

Home News

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, MAY 13, 1991 3

EC to help Jordan reclaim, exploit dry land

AMMAN (J.T.) — The European Community (EC) is helping Jordan to implement a project designed to reclaim and exploit dry and semi-arid regions, south east of Amman, near the town of Muwaqqar, according to Dr. Awni Tueimeh, the project's technical director.

The University of Jordan, which has been entrusted with the task of implementing the project, is hoping to fight off desertification and at the same time increase food production, said Dr. Tueimeh in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, and other representatives of the media.

The area in question, around Muwaqqar, is nearly 2,000 dunums and the annual rainfall it receives is 250 millimetres, said Dr. Tueimeh during a tour with media people during which journalists were briefed on the various stages of the programme.

The University of Jordan is planting fruit trees and is utilising surface water to irrigate the trees, said Dr. Tueimeh. He said the Muwaqqar project was a pilot scheme expected to be extended to over 13 per cent of Jordan's area with similar semi-arid conditions.

According to Dr. Tueimeh, the university has already built three earth dams to store up to 90,000 cubic metres of surface and rain water to be used in irrigating the farmlands within the project.

The university plans to publish a full report once the various stages of the project have been completed, he said.

Dr. Tueimeh said that the project had been extended until 1996, and the Ministry of Agriculture had been brought in to participate and to benefit from the experience for possible application in other areas of Jordan.



Her Majesty Queen Noor Sunday presents an award to a nurse in appreciation of her dedicated service to the community (Petra photo)

Nurses honoured for lifetime services to the community

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 30 veteran nurses were honoured by Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein Sunday on the International Nursing Day in recognition of their noble and humanitarian services to the Jordanian community.

During the celebration held at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC), the Queen distributed awards to the nurses who served for at least 25 years or those already retired.

Addressing the celebration was Dr. Mohammad Zaben, minister of municipal and rural affairs and the environment, who is acting health minister.

He expressed the nation's pride

in the nurse and all those working in the health fields, and thanked the Queen for patronising the celebration, a gesture, he said, that displays interest and encouragement to the "angels of mercy."

Dr. Zaben reviewed the Health Ministry's endeavours to develop the nursing profession and said that the country now has five nurses training colleges which turn out much needed men and women to offer their services to the community.

Yousef Khalil, president of the Jordanian Nursing Association (JNA), addressed the celebration paying tribute to the veteran

nurses who spent their lives offering assistance to the members of society "in war and peace whenever needed."

Mr. Khalil said that some of the veteran nurses had obtained doctorate degrees and many others were still pursuing their studies for higher degrees and diplomas.

Among those honoured by the Queen on this occasion were 20 veteran nurses, seven nurses with doctorate degrees and three male nurses.

The JNA, which was established in 1972, groups 2,500 male and female nurses and at least 500 midwives.

TCC goes ahead with plans to sue defaulters

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) said Sunday it was going ahead with plans to take to court telephone subscribers who have so far failed to settle their dues and announced that it would soon publish the names of a second batch of people to be given 15 days to pay their bills before the TCC resorts to legal action.

A TCC official said that the second list of names would be published in the coming week, but "it would be advisable for the defaulters to pay now, otherwise TCC will have 1992 to apply the terms of the 1992 law concerning the collection of state funds, which entails confiscation of a person's property until his dues are settled."

TCC Director General Mohammad Shaded Ismail Satur-

day appealed to all subscribers to settle their dues in time, help the TCC carry out further expansion projects and offer better services to the subscribers.

Speaking in a television programme, Mr. Ismail said that TCC services benefitted nearly a quarter of a million subscribers who should pay their dues which enable the TCC to cover the cost of services and expansion.

The first list of names was published last week and the TCC has been in contact with the subscribers in order to ensure payment before the corporation resorts to court to settle the issue, according to Director to TCC's Financial Affairs Department Ahmad Munes.

He said that these subscribers owed the TCC JD 6 million and the TCC was in bad need of the funds for its operations.

Iraqi-American women on humanitarian mission in Iraq

By Serena Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — During the 42 days of war against Iraq a group of Iraqi-American women, devastated by what was happening to their original homeland, came together and formed a humanitarian organisation, Victims of War (VOW), to help the 18 million Iraqi civilians caught up in the web of international politics and strategic planning.

On Sunday, seven VOW delegates left for Iraq with \$200,000 worth of medical supplies, that they collected from donations in the United States. The delegates are also on a fact-finding mission, to investigate the effects of the war on civilian life, and to assess the situation and needs of the people.

Earlier in March VOW sent the first delegation to Jordan with medicine and 3,000 letters from Iraqis in the United States to their families in Iraq. "We want to seek the truth, and what happened to 18 million people who had no say in their fate," Nadia Atisha, a member of VOW said.

According to another member, Christine Oram, an Iraqi-American and a cofounder of VOW, the organisation has greatly helped the Iraqi community in the United States during the war, and brought them closer together. "It was a means of therapy for us," Ms. Oram told the Jordan Times. "Our lives have changed greatly," Fadia Gulli, an Iraqi-American housewife said describing her experience during the war, especially that she is living in a country that was

fighting her original homeland. "I want to help the Iraqis as much as I can," she said. "I have devoted myself to VOW. The seed is planted and I want to watch it grow," Ms. Gulli added.

VOW, a non-political, non-profit humanitarian organisation, worked closely with the Iraqi and Jordanian Red Crescent societies to facilitate the transfer of food and medicine donated to Iraq.

Describing American public reaction to their organisation, Ms. Oram said "the American public in general has a great heart. They believe in helping out when they hear of a tragedy." She also added that 75 per cent of telephone calls to VOW come from concerned Americans interested in extending help to the people of Iraq.

VOW is also supported by the Chaldean Catholic diocese and the Islamic Mosque Institutions in the United States. "It took a human tragedy to bring us all closer together," Nadia Atisha said. "But in our hearts and in our souls we can never deny who or what we are," she added.

As for the future goal of VOW, Ms. Oram said that the organisation would continue promoting and increasing the consciousness of the general public in the United States and the whole world. "The human spirit moves every volunteer in VOW. (This spirit) will help those trapped in this war. We will never have any regrets for what we have done," Christine Oram said summing up the humanitarian nature of their mission for their homeland.

VTC, LSDC to train Bahrainis

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Beirut-based Lebanese Services Development Corporation (LSDC) and the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) Sunday signed an agreement of cooperation in training personnel and developing human resources in Bahrain.

Under the agreement, the VTC will provide specialised training skills and organise training courses, and the LSDC will market the VTC's package programmes in Arab countries.

The agreement was signed for VTC by its Director General Ahmad Atwan and for the LSDC by its Director General Dr. Elias Khouri.

The VTC does not only offer its services to the Jordanian community, it has also been providing Arab countries and organisations with its services, represented in the training of personnel, said Mr. Atwan in a statement after the signing ceremony.

The VTC offered expertise to develop Yemen's technical education system in 1988 and 1989, a project financed by the World Bank.

The VTC board has recently agreed to offer training to 150 Eritreans, free of charge within the Kingdom's five-year (1991-1995) training plan, Mr. Atwan added.

Dr. Khouri said that the Lebanese corporation, which has branches in Cyprus, and Paris, mainly prepared plans for the development of technical and vocational training in Arab countries.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the Lebanese cor-

poration undertakes similar activities to those of the VTC, but carries out its programmes on an international scale.

It prepares training packages, produces textbooks and teaching aids related to vocational and technical training.

The VTC, which is affiliated to the Labour Ministry, runs the Kingdom's Vocational Training Centres, organises short, medium and long-term training programmes at its centres, for workers already employed in the public and private sectors, and provides training to job-seekers to help them assume occupations filled by non-Jordanian workers.

Recently the VTC has introduced special programmes, training Jordanian youth on dressmaking, the manufacture of brick and cutting of stone, truck driving and other trades much needed by the local community.

King awards medal to outgoing UNICEF official

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday conferred upon Mr. Richard Reid, UNICEF's outgoing Amman-based regional director for the Middle East and North Africa, Jordan's "Al Istiklal" medal of the first order, in appreciation of his efforts to promote the cause of children in Jordan. The medal was awarded at an audience with Mr. Reid, who called at the Royal Court to bid farewell to His Majesty, on the occasion of the end of his tour of duty in Jordan.

During the audience, the King also signed the "World Decla-

ration on Child Survival, Protection and Development" and the plan of action in the Summit Declaration, which was adopted at the World Summit for Children on September 30, 1990. Jordan's signing of the declaration and plan of action commits it to work towards providing a better future for children.

King Hussein's audience with the UNICEF regional director coincided with Jordan's ratification, by Royal decree, of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. This action brought to 80 the number of countries that

have ratified the convention in the past year and a half. Jordan is the fifth Arab country to have done so.

Later Sunday, Mr. Reid paid courtesy visits to Her Majesty Queen Noor, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and their Royal Highnesses Princess Sarvath and Princess Basma to bid them farewell.

Mr. Reid is to be succeeded to the post in Jordan by Edward Lannert who is currently UNICEF's representative in Cairo.

Libyan team ends visit, lauds Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Members of a Libyan delegation wound up a several-day visit to Jordan Sunday after meeting with official and public figures here.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, before their departure, they described their visit as very fruitful and affirmed that there exists a convergence of views between Jordan and Libya on pan-Arab issues.

The members of the delegation, on a tour of Arab states in a bid to enhance cooperation ties among Arab countries, lauded the democratic experience in Jordan and stressed the need to

support Jordan politically and economically to enable it to remain steadfast on the longest demarcation line with Israel.

They also expressed their gratitude for the Jordanian government, which allowed them to meet with all Jordanian political currents, which they said shows that the authorities in Jordan believe in the correctness of their policies and in the citizens' truthful feelings of belonging.

The delegation met during its visit to Jordan with speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament and representatives of

parliamentary blocs and visited the Ministry of Higher Education and the Royal Scientific Society. It also met with representatives of political, youth, labour and unions movements and discussed with them ways of confronting challenges facing the Arab Nation and ways of activating a common Arab market.

It also participated in several seminars and meetings held in several Jordanian cities to discuss Arab unity and the role of popular movements in reaching that goal.

AEHC helps channel aid into Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the Arab Emergency Health Committee (AEHC) has so far dispatched 1,200 tonnes of medicines and medical equipment as well as 3,200 tonnes of food supplies to Iraq and handed them to the Iraqi National Red Crescent Society for distribution in areas most affected by the Gulf war, according to Dr. Hassan Khreis, the committee chairman.

The shipments, which came from Jordan and other Arab countries, have been channelled through Amman, and waves of doctors and specialists were sent over to Iraq in order to offer medical treatment to the war victims, said Dr. Khreis in a statement following his return here after paying a visit to Iraq at the head of a committee delegation.

During the five-day visit Dr. Khreis and his group met President Saddam Hussein and briefed him on the committee's operations and services in Iraq. The committee, set up by the Arab Health Ministers Council, has recruited doctors and nurses volunteers from Arab countries in North Africa, Sudan, Yemen and Jordan, who were sent for the humanitarian mission in Iraq in the wake of the Gulf war, said Dr. Khreis.

During the team's visit, he said, a special committee branch was established in Baghdad to supervise the coordination of relief supplies and organisation of medical services at hospitals in cooperation with the local medical and health authorities.

The team identified the Iraqi people's needs and medical requirements prior to arranging for further shipments, Dr. Khreis added.

According to Dr. Khreis, life was gradually returning to normal in Baghdad and other cities, and the price of various commodities are declining.

Jordanian Medical Association President Dr. Mamdouh Abadi was in the team accompanying Dr. Khreis on his visit.

Arab League to elect new secretary general in Cairo

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in the Arab League's 95th council session, which will be held at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo on Wednesday at the foreign ministers level, according to an official announcement here Sunday.

The announcement said that Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri would lead the Jordanian delegation to the meeting, the first of its kind in terms of participation of all Arab countries after the Gulf war.

The ministers will elect a new secretary general for the Arab League, to succeed Chadli Kijhi who resigned his post last September, and Egypt's candidate Esmat Abdul Majid is expected to be elected for the post since he is the sole candidate so far, according to the announcement.

It said that Jordan, along with other Arab countries, had given its approval of Abdul Majid, who is Egypt's foreign minister, to the post of Arab League secretary general.

According to the announcement, the Arab ministers are expected to discuss, among other things, the Palestine question, the Arab-Israeli conflict, Soviet Jewish immigration to Palestine, Afro-Arab cooperation and Euro-Arab dialogue.

This will be the first official council meeting to be held in Egypt after the Arab countries decided to move the league's headquarters back to Cairo from Tunis.

The representatives of the Arab countries had met for a council meeting last March and, according to the announcement, it was attended by all Arab states.

According to Foreign Ministry sources here, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) delegation is expected to submit a proposal to the league calling for a meeting of the five Arab countries in direct confrontation with Israel — Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine — to coordinate their position vis-a-vis the current efforts to establish peace in the region.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Sarvath opens bazaar

MADABA (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath, the honorary president of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) women branch, opened Sunday a charity bazaar at JNRCS premises in Madaba on the occasion of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Day. Princess Sarvath toured the various sections of the bazaar which displayed handicrafts by members of the general committee of JNRCS' Madaba Office.

Director to outline MAP activities

AMMAN (J.T.) — Pauline Cutting, director of Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), is to address the public on the general health conditions in the Israeli-held Arab territories on Tuesday. Mr. Cutting, who took part in the MAP march last Friday to raise funds to benefit the Palestinians, is expected to give details about life under occupation and outline MAP's activities to help the Palestinian people. The lecture will be held at UKAS Club (British universities graduates club) in Amman.

Police to reveal robberies' details

AMMAN (Petra) — The director of the Police Department in the Amman Governorate is to address a press conference Monday to reveal details about a spate of robberies which occurred in the Amman region over the past few days. The culprits involved in these robberies have already been arrested and the stolen items retrieved.

Jordan, Syria review education ties

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the Ministry of Education is in Damascus, on a week-long visit to Syria, in response to an invitation by the Syrian Ministry of Education. The delegation will meet with Syrian officials for talks on ways of enhancing bilateral cooperation in educational fields, and will be familiarised with Syria's accomplishments in developing its educational system. The delegation comprises Director of the ministry's Examinations Department Mohammad Sayel Obaidat, Director of the Administrative Affairs Department Abdul Wahab Tarawneh, Director of the Cultural Affairs Department Hussein Qanah, Student Affairs Director Zuhair Zakaria and Vocational Department Director Ali Nasrallah.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Art exhibition by Nazir Ismail at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of etchings, lithographs and monographs, by Ahmad Nawash and Yasser Duweik at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (10 a.m. — 5 p.m.).
- ★ Exhibition of Arab calligraphy at the University of Jordan.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by Jordanian artists Ziad Al Momani, Jawad Hatauleh and Sultan Al Kofabi at Yarmouk University.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings and handicrafts by Jordanian artist Jamilah Saleh at Mu'ta University.
- ★ Exhibition of embroideries, knit wear, artificial flowers and wood work by deaf students at Queen Alia Centre for the Hearing Impaired, Zarqa.

FILMS

- ★ French film entitled "L'Amour a mort" at the French Cultural Centre — 8 p.m.
- ★ Video film entitled "Mansfield Park (Part I)" at the British Council — 6:00 p.m.

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Second prize: Air Ticket to USA	no. (02189)
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Jordan Times

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Time for decisions and decisive action

THE PEACE process in the Middle East is at a crossroads, not so much because U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's fourth trip to the area is a "do or die" mission but because of what Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has in store for Baker or his Soviet counterpart Alexander Bessmertnykh. The Arab side has laid all their cards on the table and accommodated the various peace initiatives as far as any party can reasonably want them to. Shamir is a master of old tricks when it comes to pulling the rug from under any would-be peace-maker no matter what his thoughts are. He was of course his old self again when he greeted the fourth Baker tour and Bessmertnykh's first visit to the region with declarations and policy statements that are sure to abort any remaining prospects for peace. "We will not retreat and we will mobilise every drop of desire, energy, and capability to stand up for our rights to the land of Israel," Shamir was quoted as saying Sunday during a ceremony to commemorate Israel's seizure and annexation of Arab East Jerusalem. Of course the entire world knows only too well what Shamir means by the "land of Israel."

The Israeli prime minister and his Likud Party have never concealed their definition of the "land of Israel" and made sure that Arabs and non-Arabs alike would be served with notice that as far as Tel Aviv is concerned the Jewish state stretches from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River. For all intents and purposes, therefore, Israel has reiterated its well entrenched position that rejects ipso facto the return of Arab territories captured in the 1967 war in return for peace. If this is no affront to Baker and President George Bush who subscribed so clearly to the formula of peace for territory and associated themselves with it so closely, one does not know what is.

This statement by Shamir, coupled with his dismissal as useless gimmick Baker's success in getting the Gulf Arab states to agree to attend the proposed peace conference, should come as no surprise to the Arab side for it has always suspected that at least as long as Shamir is at the helm of Israeli politics peace has little chance of ever being achieved. What remains to be seen is Washington's and Moscow's reaction to Israel's rejection of every peace offer and gesture. Time for friendly persuasion is obviously running out and what Baker and Bessmertnykh are called upon to do is to pool their efforts and come out with a concerted reply to Shamir's obstinacy. The least that the Arab side is entitled to under the circumstances is some affirmative action by the international community spearheaded by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev to make Israel heed the voice of reason and international legitimacy. Short of being ready and willing to put pressure on Israel, the Americans and the Soviets may be wasting valuable time to bring peace to this troubled land.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily expressed belief Sunday that the arrival of James Baker in the Middle East for yet another tour is bound to give momentum to the efforts of his Soviet counterpart Alexander Bessmertnykh. But before leaving Washington to embark on the trip, Baker has hinted that the so-called regional conference to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict was expected to deal with the distribution of water, among other issues demanded by the Israelis, the paper said. It is also noted that Baker did not mention the essential mission which is the implementation of the international legitimacy, but announced the Gulf countries' acceptance of the idea of participating in the conference which, he said, must also deal with the question of disarmament in the region, the paper pointed out. Despite Washington's earlier decision to remain committed to Security Council resolutions, Baker has not yet embarked on such questions as the right of the Palestinian people in determining their future; and this gives cause to some doubts about his mission, and gives rise to fears that Washington was determined to exercise pressure only on the Arabs to give concessions, said the paper. The paper said the Arabs have repeatedly expressed desire to reach a just and durable peace, but Israel continues to reject peace bids, refuses to recognise the rights of the Palestinians and is placing all obstacles in the path of a settlement.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily calls on the ministries of water, industry and agriculture to admit their failure in curbing the level of pollution in the water of the King Talal Dam, and to abandon old policies which have proved futile so far. Nazhi says all the previous policies followed by these ministries to persuade the factories to halt the dumping of waste in the Zaqra River, whose water flows towards the dam, have ended in total failure and the time has come for a new policy and stricter measures to ensure that the disaster to the Jordan Valley farmlands will not be repeated. He says that while the factory owners amassed fortunes from their industries, they were creating misery to the farmers of the Jordan Valley, and causing a real disaster to the Jordanian agricultural sector, forcing farmers and fruit growers to go bankrupt. It is time for the concerned authorities to admit that it is the poi... ed water in the King Talal Dam that destroyed the crops of the Jordan Valley, says the writer. One they admit the failure of the previous policies, he adds, these concerned authorities can embark on stricter measures that can stop the flow of poison down the river and to the crops which Jordanian consume.

Weekly Political Pulse

Jordan's press during the Gulf crisis: A faithful mirror of people's sentiments

ONE of the most serious charges levelled against the Jordanian press during the Gulf crisis was that it lacked pluralism in thought, reflection and analysis commensurate with the existing formal democratic institutions in the country. It is often asserted by critics that one could not find during those trying times any opposing view to the stampede in favour of Iraq throughout the Gulf ordeal. Some observers have interpreted this absence of variations in perspective on the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait as evidence that the Jordanian press was anything but pluralistic and democratic! This is clearly a serious complaint that needs to be addressed and investigated especially now with the benefit of hindsight.

Some facts may shed light on this phenomenon that perplexed some native and foreign observers.

To begin with, there was a near unanimity of views among Jordanians on the Gulf crisis from A to Z. Why this was so is another matter. Yet the issue remains the same in the sense that Jordanians have sympathised with Iraq throughout the Gulf conflict and saw in the U.S.-led coalition campaign against Iraq not just the ending of Iraq's occupation and the annexation of Kuwait but also a deliberate attempt to decapitate a powerful Arab country that promises to realise a strategic balance between Israel and the Arab Nation. In this vein, one can say the same thing about Western media in the sense that they too were devoid of pluralistic analysis on the Gulf conflict.

Secondly, there were some faint voices within Jordan which whispered opposing views to the pro-Iraqi side. But such voices were kept muted by choice of those who held them. I doubt that the Jordanian press would have refused to print an opposing view had the people who expressed them in private chose to do so in public.

As the current of support for Iraq was so overwhelming, it was unthinkable for the silent opposer to swim against the current and say loudly what they were thinking and saying quietly.

Thirdly, the method by which the U.S.-led forces had dealt with Iraq made Iraq look more like a victim than an aggressor. To this context there was a general conviction by Jordanians that Iraq was set up — a view buttressed by recent revelations — and that His Majesty King Hussein's efforts to defuse the situation and bring it to a peaceful resolution were deliberately aborted in order to execute some kind of a master plan. Whether in fact there was a well orchestrated conspiracy against Iraq is besides the point. The main point is that people believed it and it enjoyed wide currency among the people of all classes and backgrounds.

Fourth, the signal from the government was loud and clear in support of Iraq. If there were any hesitation on the part of the people and the mass media, it was resolved firmly in the direction of the signals that emanated from the government. The people may have been carried away with emotions but once these sympathetic emotions in support of Iraq were beamed up by government policy pronouncements, the people's convictions became much more firmly rooted. Little did the public know of Jordan's continuous counsel to Iraqi leadership to get out of the trap that was set up for their country. It is common knowledge now that after King Hussein's efforts to realise a negotiated settlement of the crisis was frustrated, he concluded that the only way left for Iraq to do is to withdraw from Kuwait and frustrate the plans to engage it in a catastrophic and devastating war.

In conclusion, the lack of pluralism in the Jordanian press during the Gulf conflict was a natural phenomenon that logically

ensued from a genuine feeling by the greater majority of the people of Jordan that Iraq was unduly victimised by foreign and some Arab governments and that the only honourable thing left for the people to do is to side with Iraq. This across the board perspective was shared also by Jordanians who vehemently opposed the occupation of Kuwait and saw in it every element of a disaster for the Arab Nation. No wonder then that the Jordanian press faithfully reflected these commonly shared attitudes.

Still, there was some room for presenting a counter view on the crisis, notwithstanding that such a view would not have been the most popular thing to express. This opportunity was not seized and some Jordanians now regret having missed their chance to advocate an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait before the noose got tighter around Iraq's neck. In retrospect, Iraq's better interests would have been better served if there were stronger and louder calls for withdrawal from Kuwait than the case had been. Such clear signals from the friends and allies of Iraq would have carried much weight simply because they would have come from the genuine supporters of Iraq.

However, the saddest moment in the Jordanian press history would be to make a complete turn about now after the defeat of Iraq. This is especially difficult after it abstained from carrying out its full duty to call a spade a spade when the going was tough. Most of all, the silent critics of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait have in effect forfeited their right to speak out against Iraq after having failed to do so at a time when it could have made some difference. And wherever the Jordanian press may have gone wrong on the handling of the Gulf conflict, it is no fault of it, because it remained throughout a faithful mirror of the people's sentiments.

Mideast bank won't solve economic woes, say U.S. experts

By Rosalind Mandine

WASHINGTON — A proposed regional development bank in the Middle East will not solve the area's economic disparity and growth problems, experts told a congressional committee May 9.

Questions on which countries will participate, how much they will contribute and who will ultimately benefit from a Middle East regional bank were addressed by a round-table panel discussion organised by the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia.

The panelists included Alfred Leroy Atherton, former ambassador to Egypt and former assistant secretary of state for the Near East and South Asia; James Placke, director of the Cambridge Energy Research Associates; Patricia Clawson, editor of Orbis, a foreign policy magazine; Melinda Kimball, director of Egyptian Affairs at the State Department; and Theodore Kettoul, director of Syrian Affairs at the State Department. The discussion was chaired by Senator Terry Sanford, a Democrat from North Carolina.

Several panelists voiced doubts about the ultimate utility of a regional development bank in the Middle East in the context of solving problems of economic

growth. The panelists agreed that aid alone is not the solution to the Middle East's economic problems and stressed that economic reform and attracting investment should be priority goals.

(Secretary of State James Baker earlier this year outlined reconstruction plan for the Middle East that included a regional development bank).

It is questionable that the oil-rich states, like Saudi Arabia, will be able to contribute the funds needed to make a regional bank in the Middle East viable, several panelists said.

The "impression that the Saudis would be a paymaster to the region's problems" stands on shaky ground, given the financial constraints Saudi Arabia now faces, Clawson said.

The Saudis "have run out of available foreign exchange reserves," he noted, adding that Saudi Arabia has become one of the "largest borrowers on the international market in the 1990s."

Placke echoed these points, saying "Saudi Arabia does not have the financial resources it once had... There are less funds to finance undertakings, including regional development effort."

Kuwait and Iraq are also in no position to contribute to such a fund at present, Placke noted.

"Iraq's development has been set back by a decade," he said, adding that an estimated \$20,000 million will be needed in investment to rebuild Iraq's infrastructure. The costs of Kuwait's rebuilding efforts are estimated at \$500,000 million, he said.

While Saudi Arabia and Kuwait "will not have a great deal of resources to contribute to this effort," the Gulf Cooperation Council has committed itself to providing \$10,000 million for a development fund, Melinda Kimball noted.

On a recent trip to the region, U.S. Secretary of Treasury Nicholas Brady discussed possible uses of the GCC fund, including "using resources in conjunction with U.S. aid and World Bank resources that would lead to economic reform and restructuring," Kimball said.

The question of outside participation in the development bank will unavoidably be connected to politics and the participation of Israel, thereby creating an impossible situation, Clawson stressed.

Europe and Japan are not interested in participating in the such a bank without the participation of the United States, Clawson said. The United States, on

the other hand, will most likely only participate if Israel is included — a likelihood that is doubtful when taking into account the politics of the region, he said.

The participation of Israel could become "quite a barrier" to getting a regional development bank going, Clawson noted.

Ambassador Atherton stressed that the United States "should not support a bank without Israel."

The arms race in the Middle East is another political and security issue tied to the development bank, the panelists stated. Senator Orrin Hatch (Republican from Utah) asked whether U.S. participation in the development bank should be tied to arms expenditures in the region by countries like Syria.

Kettoul had noted earlier that Syria is buying new arms from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia with the cash grants it has received from the Gulf states. While Kettoul declined to answer Hatch's question directly, he stressed that the United States wants "to see a general reduction in the overall arms configuration in the area."

Clawson suggested that arms transfers in the region should be conducted on a cash-basis only, thereby reducing the ability of countries in the Middle East to

purchase high-tech arms and weapons of mass destruction.

Ultimately the question of who will actually benefit from a regional bank must be addressed, Clawson said. He speculated that those who will benefit from the bank will be the "most attractive borrowers," and the least in need of economic aid — such countries as Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey and Algeria. "These are not countries you have in mind when talking about the have-nots of the region," he said.

The utility of a regional development bank must be discussed in the context of "ameliorating poverty in the Middle East," Clawson stressed. "Aid will not help without competent economic policies," he said, adding that attracting investment should be a priority in the region.

Kimball also stressed this point, saying economic growth in the region requires "a lot more work than just redistributing the wealth. Development is — first and foremost — a self-directed, self-initiated process... Aid can only be a catalyst," she said.

"An environment that leads to sustained economic growth" must be created in the Middle East, she said. This would require policies aimed at attracting investment and instituting economic reform and restructuring, she added.

Kimball noted that Egypt's recent accord with the International Monetary Fund on economic restructuring and the presence of an IMF team in Jordan for discussions on reforms were two hopeful signs for the region.

Kimball conceded that economic reforms in the Middle East must be balanced with the political expectations of the people. A "massive undertaking in overhauling economic policies" in the Middle East — much like on the scale of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union — is needed, Kimball said. However, the ability of regimes in the region to survive the political shocks caused by such massive reforms must be taken into account, she noted.

Kimball underscored that the idea of a regional development bank in the Middle East is still under discussion and that, in the meantime, the region should address immediate needs and utilise existing institutions.

"We have institutions, like the IMF and the World Bank, that can help catalyse economic development," she said.

"First we have to address immediate needs and use the institutions that are available. Let's get things moving on the right track as we think about the issue of a regional bank and whether it makes sense," Kimball said. U.S. Information Agency.

Israel wants the water that lies beneath the occupied lands

By Jack Redden
Reuters

MEVO HORON, West Bank

— The lush fields and concealed ruins around this Jewish settlement tell of a struggle over water that goes to the heart of the relentless competition between Israelis and Palestinians.

Water pipes emerge from the ground beside Mevo Horon to feed the fertile soil just inside the occupied West Bank. A large pool fed by an underground spring sparkles in the sun.

But obscured by a neighbouring grove of trees lie twisted metal rods and concrete from a Palestinian village that once used the water. It was bulldozed out of existence when Israel occupied the area in the 1967 Middle East war.

The nearest Palestinian community, Beit Ligy, has no wells and when the winter rain water collected by villagers runs out they now send tank trucks to buy water from the Jewish settlement.

There are concerns about that scarce resource in all the occupied territories — the Golan Heights taken from Syria, the Gaza Strip from Egypt and the West Bank from Jordan.

In the Golan Heights, Israel is anxious to protect the sources feeding the Jordan river, a key supply of fresh water piped throughout the Jewish state.

The Gaza Strip shares the coastal aquifer that underlies

the most densely populated part of Israel. It has been so over-used that seawater seeping from the Mediterranean has turned the water brackish.

But competition is at its most intense in the West Bank. In the past 23 years, Israel has become dependent on the aquifer beneath it.

"Israel needs water and Arabs need water, but there are limited resources," said Abdul Rahman Tamimi, a ground water expert with the Palestinian Hydrology group. "We have limited resources — but unlimited military orders to prevent Palestinian development of water."

Israel recognised the importance from the moment it captured the West Bank; one of the army's first acts was to place all water under its control and declare most information on it secret.

Without Israeli approval no new Palestinian wells can be dug, dry ones cannot be replaced and existing ones cannot be repaired. Arab consumption is carefully monitored and limited, at prices more than four-times charged to Israelis.

Meanwhile, water development for Israeli settlement in the occupied territories has raced ahead. Green lawns adorn Jewish enclaves in a desert landscape. Some 100,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank use almost as much

water as a million Palestinian residents.

"You can't find any Israeli settlement without water," Tamimi said. "But you can find hundreds of Arab villages without water."

The aquifer beneath the West Bank is now being used almost to capacity, with 88 per cent of the water going to Israelis in the occupied territories or the pre-1967 Jewish state.

Israeli wells, up to six times deeper than Palestinian ones which never exceed 100 metres, are causing wells and springs that have fed Arab villages for centuries to dry up during the long hot summers.

The Palestinian Hydrology group, formed by Arab engineers and geologists alarmed at the increasingly serious water problem, says the portion of farm land irrigated by West Bank Arabs has dropped from 27 per cent to only four per cent under the occupation.

Not a single new Palestinian well for irrigation has been allowed since 1967. In contrast, Israeli settlers in the area are irrigating 70 per cent of their farmland.

relentlessly.

It has become a key, though largely unpublicised complication in negotiating an Israeli withdrawal and independence for Palestinians. Both sides recognise the water, which falls on the West Bank but flows towards Israel, will have to be shared.

"We will have that problem whether it is in the state of Israel or not," said Dr. Ronit Nativ, a hydrologist with Hebrew University. "It's something that has to be resolved regardless of whether we stay there."

But other Israelis, whether from real concern or to buttress arguments to keep the land, say the Jewish state cannot give Palestinians control of the water even with agreement on sharing.

Following the installation of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's rightwing government last year, the agriculture ministry printed full-page statements in newspapers saying Palestinians could not be trusted to manage the water or to satisfy Israeli needs.

The message dismissed historic or religious reasons for keeping the land, bluntly saying Israel would stay because it wants the water.

"It is difficult to conceive of any political solution consistent with Israel's survival that does not involve complete Israeli control of the water."

LETTERS

Absurd logic

To the Editor:

I WOULD like to comment on Ramez Mahuf's very interesting article on Israel as a theocracy (Jordan Times, May 8, 1991). Article I of the Bill of Rights of the constitution of the United States of America stipulates the following:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

This article constitutes a general prohibition on supporting the establishment of official religion, by the U.S. Congress, inside the U.S. or overseas. Thus any official involvement by the U.S. Congress in facilitating such activity, whether through economic, military, political, diplomatic, informational or other means, constitute, a flagrant violation of the U.S. constitution. And since the president is answerable to Congress, the source of all legislation, the same restrictions apply to the executive branch. By the same token, the judicial branch of the U.S. government shall not be exempt from this prohibition.

We are dismayed to report, however, that the three branches of the U.S. government have consciously ignored these restrictions on their activities.

U.S. presidents, since Harry Truman, have gone out of their way in their fervent attempts to please the Jewish state of Israel, a theocracy whose support is clearly included in Article I above. Candidates for Congress and the presidency have outbid each other's commitments to support the Jewish state of Israel, sometimes to a point of reductio ad absurdum!

The U.S. Congress, for the past 40 years, has consistently provided Israel with untold amounts of dollars, and some of its members have extended unlimited support for the "well-being" and "security" of the Jewish state of Israel.

The U.S. judicial authorities have prosecuted Palestinians upon the request of the Jewish state of Israel, and charged them with terrorist activities against a state whose support is, strictly speaking, illegal by the U.S. constitution.

To show how serious the American people are about the restriction on congressional activities cited in Article I, we remind the good readers of the response Ronald Reagan received when he proposed to ask Congress to approve allowing school children to have a ten minute break for private meditation if the children wished to. Reagan's proposal was met with almost unanimous rejection by the American people, and he had to forego requesting Congress to approve it.

It seems that the behaviour of the U.S. Congress, the presidents and the judicial branch violates, Article I of the Bill of Rights of the constitution of those otherwise beautiful United States, where my family and I have had the greatest of times. Pity, isn't it?

Mohamad Zakaria,
Amman.

Superpowers link up on effort

(Continued from page 1)

flexibility from Syria and Israel. This is Mr. Baker's fourth Middle East peace mission since the end of the Gulf war and officials in Washington suggested it would be his last unless he achieved a breakthrough.

In Cairo, Mr. Baker went straight into his meeting with Mr. Bessmertnykh whom he hoped could also help moderate the positions of some of the parties.

Syria insists on the U.N. having an important role in the peace conference. But Israel regards the U.N. as irretrievably hostile and is determined to keep it out.

The other major issue is whether the conference should be able to call itself back into session periodically to review progress. The Arabs say it should, Israel says no.

Despite the downbeat mood, the official indicated that some earlier disputes had been virtually settled, particularly the question of who should represent the Palestinians. But he gave no details of what had been agreed.

He said the sides also agreed that the conference's terms of reference should be U.N. resolutions 242 and 338.

Diplomats believe the identity of Palestinian participants would pose the toughest test for Mr. Baker and Mr. Bessmertnykh.

The controversy over the occupied territories and their Palestinian population was underlined

on Sunday when Israel's supreme court approved the expelling of four Palestinians from the Gaza Strip.

Earlier on Sunday, a senior Soviet diplomat in Cairo took a cautious stance on peace prospects, saying Mr. Bessmertnykh was carrying no special plan on the Middle East.

"There are no special ideas. We will try to find out what is the situation and listen to the ideas of the other sides. We will try to find understanding," he said.

Mr. Bessmertnykh earlier told the Soviet news agency Novosti that he and Mr. Baker have agreed to take turns in chairing a Middle East peace conference.

He said current peace efforts were the first "real chance" to reach a settlement in many years and urged that a framework acceptable to all parties be found.

Mr. Bessmertnykh was expected to visit Saudi Arabia on Monday in the first such trip since the two countries resumed ties last fall after a half-century rupture.

Saudi and Soviet officials in Riyadh on Sunday confirmed that Mr. Bessmertnykh was due in the kingdom's capital on Monday evening.

He was to meet with Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal, a Saudi official said.

Earlier Sunday Mr. Bessmertnykh took time off from politics to play tourist, visiting the Giza Pyramids, the Sphinx and the Egyptian museum.

Bush praises GCC position

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Gorbachev was "good," adding: "We ironed out a few difficulties." Bush did not elaborate.

The Saudi-led Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) announced on Saturday that it would send an observer to the proposed peace conference. The announcement by Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal was made in Luxembourg after talks with European Community (EC) foreign ministers.

The Gulf states' offer to send an observer in a proposed Middle East conference earlier drew cautious praise from Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy.

But the top aide in Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir later dismissed the offer. "We don't need observers as far as the Arab states are concerned. We need participants," Yossi Ben-Aharon told reporters.

In Riyadh, diplomatic sources said Gulf Arab states had fallen in behind U.S. plans for Middle East peace talks, sitting back from the main conference table but ready to wield their economic power to smooth any peace agreement.

The United States and the European Community had been pressing Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman to back the plan for a regional peace conference.

On another topic, Mr. Bush said the United States was "still doing what we're doing" in the 11-year effort to oust the Soviet-installed government in Afghanistan "but I'd like to see that situation evolve so we wouldn't have to do that."

The New York Times reported on Sunday that the White House had not requested funds for the Afghan rebels in its proposed 1992 budget. The Times, citing senior administration officials, said the failure to include a request for aid for the rebels indicated a growing sense that U.S. policy in Afghanistan was outmoded.

Muslims in Britain: Pressured to define loyalties

By Vivek Chaudhury and Dave Hill

THE Unlikely home of Britain's longest-established Muslim community is South Shields, Tyne and Wear. There, sailors from Yemen put down roots more than a century ago, a reminder that, while a certain type of True Brit chooses to see Islam as an alien force of fanaticism from the Indian sub-continent and petro-dollar upstarts from the Gulf, some of Britain's Muslims are long practiced at accommodating themselves with the ways of the island people.

But the last three years have seen Britain's Muslim communities embroiled in major convulsions of identity, going right to the heart of their role in British life and in the wider world. The Rushdie affair, arguments about Islamic schools and political parties and, most recently, the Gulf war, have dragged abstract issues of social and spiritual identity down from the stratosphere and set them firmly in the discourse of everyday life. The full implications are, as yet, uncertain. But the debate has been loud; and with it have come shifting sensibilities for uncomfortable times.

Take Mohsin Fadi Yehia, trustee and caretaker of the Al Azhar mosque at the bottom of South Shields' Laygate Lane. An ex-merchant seaman in his late fifties, Yehia first came to England to help with the second world war effort, responding to a call to the imperial posts from a mother country in ruins, and bringing the word of Allah with him. Islam is still important to Yehia, perhaps more now than ever. But so, too, is survival. And the moment the Iraqi army set about savaging Kuwait he took steps to bridge troubled waters already lapping at his own doorstep.

First there was the threat of conflict among the mosque's immediate and variegated Arab constituency: some British, some students attending the local Marine Technology College; some Iraqi, some Saudi, some Kuwaiti. The mosque, Yehia

assured everyone, was not taking sides over Saddam Hussein. Rather it was a place where all might pray, in unity, for peace.

Then there was the local white majority to consider. The Al Azhar ("The light"), named after a famous mosque in Cairo, has been there for nearly 20 years and community relations have been good. But what might the effect have been on the True Brit if large numbers of "our boys" had come home in body bags?

Here, Yehia's influence could not be so direct. He knew he could depend on the local police, whose sensitivity Yehia cannot praise too highly. Yet what price the fair rule of law in a land where the very word "Muslim" has been put into the mouths of the majority as a pejorative, inextricably bound up with images of Iranian hostage-takers and bearded mullahs burning books on the streets of Bradford? In such a climate of suspicion, the rapid and murderous conclusion of the Gulf war was not without its blessings.

Yehia, then, can breathe easily again. But while the seeming tranquility of Muslim sentiment in South Shields might be hailed as a triumph of multiculturalism — a satisfying snub to those who seek to equate Islam with subversion — it would be glib to regard it as typical. Indeed, Yehia himself is no model of Islamic convention in an eye-opening respect. He and his six children have all been raised as Muslims, but his wife is a British-born Yemeni Roman Catholic and took her faith from her Irish mother, who had married one of the very first Yemeni immigrants. "Oh, I'm," said Yehia, shaking his head "she is a very bad Catholic. I try hard to make her become Muslim but unfortunately I do not succeed."

The very word "Muslim," so routinely and so emotively deployed, obscures more than it describes in Britain, as anywhere else. Few catch-alls conceal a wider range of people, fragments of many national diasporas living different lives in cities from Glasgow to Gravesend. A shared reverence for the Koran and a sense, common to many, that they are outsiders in the land where they live do not amount to a universal solvent for such workaday differences.

In Bradford, where the Council of Mosques has made some of the most contentious fundamentalist pronouncements of the Rushdie-Saddam period, at least one young Muslim wrestles with gut feelings which are uncomfortably mixed. Quaiser Khan is 21, Bradford-born, Muslim-raised of Pakistani immigrant parents, grammar school-educated, Yorkshire-accented and the proprietor of a small, independent

travel agency in the heart of the Manchester district where many Muslims reside.

He has disquieting stories to tell of getting it in the neck after complaining to a mechanic that his car wasn't properly fixed ("the trouble with you people is..."); of the Pakistani driver who stepped out of his cab outside the office and punched the window of a white driver alongside. What words or gestures had passed between them back down the road?

Quaiser can hardly help but fear the worst. "You feel you just don't know what's going to happen. The more I think about it, the more I think things are not going to be good for Muslim people here."

QUAISER finds himself caught in a quagmire of conflicting loyalties over religion, race and nation. Married in a fellow Muslim from Newcastle and blessed with a baby, five months old, he doesn't want to live anywhere else. Though he's never been in a pub (except once to get his cousin out) and cannot kick the habit of having white-skinned people in mind when he speaks of "the English," Quaiser still wants to belong among them. "I think the English system is very fair and the people are very fair, generally. In many of the Muslim countries, the governments are so corrupt. In Pakistan you can't even get a phone installed without bribing somebody. If I went to live there it'd do my head in."

But he still finds himself impaled on a contradiction between the democratic virtues of his homeland and those of his spiritual elders whose hearts, it seems to Quaiser, still pine for the rural Pakistan from where many of them came. Quaiser would like to be a good Muslim and admits his devotion's full sort of the Koran's requirements as practised by the Bradford elders: "I believe in God and I believe everything that is written in the Koran," he says, but though he keeps fast and attends the mosque every Friday, he does not pray the required five times a day and concedes: "My faith is not as strong as, say, people who came here from Pakistan."

But those whose religious observation he admires have also, at times, been the same people whose public utterances have caused him most discomfort. Quaiser admits to "feeling a lot of hate" for Salman Rushdie. But he has found the conduct over the Satanic Verses and the Gulf war by some of the more devout difficult to accept.

He would have liked Rushdie's opus to be banned on the basis that the blasphemy law should be applied equally to every faith, but has always felt, even at the height

of the row, that Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwah was wrong. He is impatient with the admiration, not all of it sneaking, afforded Saddam Hussein by some: "Saddam has caused a lot of suffering and if he was a proper Muslim he wouldn't do those things. But a lot of the older people, because they've been brought up in a Muslim country, they tend to ignore a lot of the bad things."

"Some of the things the leaders say, I think well, what are they doing here? They're not helping us. The way they talk is as if we're all going back. But we're not."

Quaiser believes that as he gets older, he may embrace the Koran's strictures more closely. This, he regards primarily as the likely effect of age. But he acknowledges, too, that it may bear some relationship to alienation from Britain at large: "When you think that people want you out, it does make you more devoted to your faith because it's the only shelter you've got."

Islam's importance as a source of strength of solidarity is nowhere better illustrated than in the borough of Tower Hamlets, east London, home to large numbers of poor Bangladeshis. A community organiser called Faizel (he declined to reveal the rest of his name) who runs a scheme to help people set up small businesses, senses stirrings of renewed pride and confidence in the wake of Saddam's adventure.

SAYS Faizel: "There has been a change in how Muslims see themselves. We have been bombarded with Islam, TV programmes and so-called experts on Middle Eastern history. Each time Saddam Hussein is referred to, they say he's a Muslim. You must understand that many Muslims in the East End are working class and not very educated. For them, Islam is the central force in their lives. They now feel stronger about their religion than ever before. There's been a tremendous amount of support for Saddam around here and people can't stop talking about it."

Beamed through the western media as a caricature of evil, Saddam, in this context has become a metaphor: the one leader of the Muslim world willing to make a stand. It is this that has given him a totemic appeal to some of Britain's most underprivileged people: "Personally," says Faizel, "I don't like Saddam Hussein and what he stands for. But I think the debate is very healthy; it helps people to formu-

late ideas, learn about politics, international relations and the Muslim world. I am quite optimistic that out of the ashes of the war will rise something positive. The greater awareness of being a Muslim will spur the community to think for itself."

The articulation of Islamic conviction in Britain in the post-Gulf war period may or may not be clear and unified, may be militant or mild. But the one, clear legacy of the Gulf war for all Britain's Muslims has been the need to take careful stock of their different situations: and to respond defensively. Glasgow is not a city widely noted for its Asian population, of whatever faith. Yet it, and other Scottish cities, have attracted internal migration from England by many Muslims over the last 20 years.

For those of means, connections and enterprise, the quality of life can be good. Relaxing in a pleasant waterfront flat overlooking the River Clyde Hassan Shabid (fancy goods wholesaler), Shaikat Bunt (grocery shop proprietor), Ghulam Rabbani (bus conductor turned furniture trader) and Bashir Maan (semi-retired clothing wholesaler, now chair of the Strathclyde Racial Equality Council) reflected equably on the rewards of British or, rather — to give credit where it's due — Scottish citizenship.

From his top pocket Bunt, whose shop serves a crumbling council estate, produces £140 in crisp Scottish notes. A white customer has asked him to keep it for him and save a trip to the bank. Such trust is rare indeed. But there are unhappy stories too: a small town Muslim shopkeeper was boycotted to bankruptcy after his banter about being the best friend Saddam had was taken the wrong way by his clientele; one of their son was intercepted cutting Saddam's picture from a magazine, intending to wear it as a lapel flier the next day at school ("for God's sake you're asking for trouble, please leave it here.") All four denounce the aggression of Iraq as outrageous and anti-Muslim. Equally, they opposed the role of the U.S. and Britain as oilcentred imperialism. Result: "We are not pro-Saddam, but anti-American."

And yet, this is many non-Muslims also found, this is not a position that sits well with the descendants of John Bull. Nor is it the best advertisement for democracy that all four men have thought it best to keep such opinions among themselves — The Guardian.

Jordan seeks fresh negotiations

(Continued from page 1)

long time.

Mr. Joxe said Sunday that France, one of the members of the alliance and which contributed troops and fighter jets to the coalition, was no longer involved in any military action related to the Gulf war and would not take part in any such action

unless explicitly asked to do so by the Gulf states or the United Nations.

"Our presence is no longer a military presence but a presence of military personnel," Mr. Joxe said adding that presence is for humanitarian reasons.

Mr. Joxe leaves Amman for Paris Monday.

Syria firm on U.N. resolutions

(Continued from page 1)

tional community (a reference to Israel) will not avoid punishment."

The Syrian government newspaper Tishreen was guarded about peace prospects on Sunday. It said Mr. Baker's visit "has a special importance" due to

American-Soviet agreement on principles for a peace conference. But it noted reports the current trip would be Mr. Baker's last shuttle mission to the region and said "the losing of this last opportunity will threaten the situation in the Middle East and the whole world."

Settlers

(Continued from page 1)

Fateb members. The court granted defence lawyer Leah Tsemel's request for a 48-hour delay in the expulsions to hold a hearing on where the men would be sent. She told Israel radio she may file another appeal asking that a five-judge panel consider the expulsions.

The expulsions would raise to 67 the number of Palestinians expelled by Israel during the uprising against Israeli occupation that began in December 1987. Almost all the Palestinians have been expelled to Lebanon.

The U.S. and other Western governments have long criticised Israel's policy of expelling Palestinians, complaining it violates the Geneva conventions on treatment of civilians in occupied lands.

In March, when the four expulsion orders were issued, the U.N. Security Council adopted a statement deploring the expulsions of Palestinians involved in the uprising.

The four men — Jamal Abu Habel, 48, Mouni Msalam, 31, Hashem Ali Dahlan, 31, and Jamal Abu Jadyan, 33 — were ordered expelled after a wave of revenge stabbings of Israelis.

Shamir vows

(Continued from page 1)

in talks on such issues. Defence Minister Moshe Arens called the GCC announcement "better than nothing. But what is needed...for peace to prevail in the area is reconciliation with Israel."

Mr. Levy said the Arab decision was "first of all progress," but he went on to say that Israel wanted "not only part of the Arab states, but all the Arab states" to enter direct negotiations with Israel.

Science Minister Yuval Neeman said the Gulf states' offer was "meaningless" unless the Gulf states agreed to negotiate, instead of sending an observer to a peace conference.

Mr. Arens also praised settlements in the occupied territories at a rally where youths in the knitted skullcaps of religious Jews sang and danced.

The defence minister said Israeli leaders facing pressures to make concessions for peace are strengthened by the more than 100,000 people who have moved to settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.

"This speaks stronger than any thesis, any political discussion," he said.

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Kurdish leader voices confidence

(Continued from page 1)

"Dohuk is the crunch point. The U.N. presence will be a trial and error method. If the Kurds don't go home, then other ways must be searched," said a British military officer.

The U.N.'s special envoy, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, is to visit the town the same day. Baghdad has agreed to allow the U.N. to oversee relief operations throughout the country.

The United States, leading allied efforts to establish "safe havens" for Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq, has stopped short of moving troops into Dohuk. Washington says this would insult Baghdad.

Baghdad also opposes a U.S.-backed proposal for a civilian U.N. police force in northern Iraq.

Sending such a force to Iraq requires Security Council approval. Such a move is opposed by the Soviet Union and China.

Many refugees from Dohuk are setting up camp at a way station in Kani Masi, at the end of an asphalt road from where they fled to Turkey, leaving behind a graveyard of looted cars.

Some are being trucked to Zakho, the first "safe haven" the allies established. It has a tent city overflowing with 20,000 people.

Prince Aga Khan, who negoti-

Kuwaiti minister meets Bahrain emir

BAHRAIN (R) — Kuwaiti Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah met Bahrain's ruler Sunday for talks on rebuilding Kuwait after Gulf war damage. The Gulf News Agency said Sheikh Ali's meeting with the emir, Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa, was also attended by Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa Ben Salman Al Khalifa and his interior and defence ministers. Sheikh Ali, who was appointed last month in a post-Gulf war cabinet, briefed Sheikh Isa on the situation in Kuwait and in the Gulf after the war. "The views were identical on ways of confronting future challenges... and the need to increase military coordination within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to confront future dangers," Sheikh Ali said.

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Glasgow Rangers wins 3rd successive Scottish title

LONDON (R) — Glasgow Rangers brought a nightmarish two months to a joyful conclusion when they beat Aberdeen in the final game of the season to pip them for the Scottish title.

Rangers looked certain for their third successive championship when they travelled to Aberdeen in early March with a commanding eight-point lead.

But a late Hans Gillhaus goal sent them away empty-handed and revived Aberdeen's hopes.

While Aberdeen surged, Rangers slumped. Injuries deprived them of a host of key players while the departure of manager Graeme Souness to Liverpool last month was a body blow.

Rangers reached their nadir in the penultimate game of the season when a 3-0 defeat at Motherwell allowed Aberdeen to move ahead of them on goals scored — the two having identical points and goal difference totals.

But former England striker

Mark Hateley rescued Rangers with the two goals which condemned Aberdeen to the runners-up spot for the third year in succession.

Hateley, once of AC Milan and Monaco, scored in each half, a typically powerful header followed by a tap-in after young goalkeeper Michael Watt fumbled a shot.

New Rangers manager Walter Smith paid tribute to his side's resilience.

"Over the season we have had a succession of blows by losing key players through suspension and injury," he said.

"Against Aberdeen they showed their determination and character. It was not the best of football, but they knuckled down and fought superbly well."

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson, who guided Aberdeen to the championship in 1985, will doubtless spare a thought for his old club. But he has some pressing worries of his own.

United may be without England central defender Gary Pallister when they play Barcelona in the European Cup Winners' Cup final in Rotterdam Wednesday.

Pallister limped out of Saturday's 3-0 defeat at Crystal Palace with a thigh injury.

United, their attention clearly focused on the Rotterdam game, left out six first team regulars.

Newly-crowned champions Arsenal confirmed their pedigree with a 6-1 drubbing of Coventry, Swedish winger Anders Limpar scoring a hat-trick.

The victory ensured they became the first team this century to complete a league season with only one defeat.

"It was a wonderful performance with a lot of goals in a carnival atmosphere. It was a lovely way to finish and I would have liked to play the whole 38 games like that," Arsenal manager George Graham said.

Perennial escapologists Luton did it again.

Their 2-0 win over already doomed Derby County kept them in the first division at the expense of Sunderland.

Luton had some help from an old friend — ex-Luton striker Mick Harford scoring an own goal to put them 1-0 ahead.

Sunderland, in their first season back in the first division, battled bravely at Manchester City but eventually lost 3-2.

Oldham took the second division championship thanks to a last minute Neil Redfearn penalty in a 3-2 win over Sheffield Wednesday.

However, the tailend of the English season was marred by crowd trouble.

Oldham's game was held up for four minutes by fighting fans and rival supporters fought on the pitch before the second division game between Bristol Rovers and West Bromwich.

Seles, Sabatini reach dream Rome final

ROME (AP) — Top-seeded Monica Seles beat back a tough challenge from Mary Joe Fernandez and will defend her Italian Open title against second-seeded Gabriela Sabatini, who cruised through her semifinal.

The second-seeded Sabatini breezed into Sunday's final with a quick and easy 6-1, 6-0 victory over fifth-seeded Conchita Martinez of Spain. Seles, however, needed two hours and 13 minutes to overcome Fernandez, the fourth seed, 7-5, 2-6, 6-4.

Fernandez also had taken Seles to three sets in their dramatic semifinal at the Australian Open, which the Yugoslav won earlier in the year.

The Rome semifinal was equally hard fought and dramatic.

"It was a tough match," said Seles.

"We were both running all the balls down, because we didn't want to give the other the slightest advantage. For me, it wasn't a day when all my shots going in. And you can't have that kind of day against a great player like Mary Joe."

Seles, the world's no. 1 player, had breezed into the semifinals, barely breaking a sweat while not dropping a set in her first matches.

But Fernandez matched the blonde Yugoslav blow for blow from the baseline, and kept Seles off the baseline to prevent her from setting up for her sharply-angled putaways.

While Fernandez had a slight advantage in play, Seles played better when it mattered, particularly in the first set when the American squandered four of five break points.

"It was a very close match," said Seles. "I couldn't think too far ahead. I just had to concen-



Monica Seles

trate on trying to win each point, and on making my shots."

Fernandez, 19, who had won just once in six previous outings against the 17-year-old Seles, showed right from the start that she had come to play. She battled back from a 5-2 deficit in a 1-hour, four-minute first set and had a chance to force a tiebreak before losing her serve and the set.

Despite the energy spent in her first set rally, Fernandez stayed even with Seles in the second set, and took a 3-2 lead with a break in game five with a backhand passing shot down the line. She then went on to win the set.

After 94 minutes of furious and often spectacular play, fatigue began to play a role in the decisive set. Both Seles and Fernandez committed an unusual number of unforced errors.

The two players exchanged service breaks for six consecutive games. Serving at 4-5, Fernandez

hit two easy balls out, and saw Seles turn her backhand volley into a winner down the line to fall to 0-40. She bravely fought off Seles' first two match points, and then narrowly missed a forehand crossing shot to give the match to Seles.

"All in all, I was happy with the match," said Fernandez. "I played very well, and I was trying to hit winners on the important shots. It was a great match."

Sabatini had a much easier time in her semifinal match. Martinez, who had played brilliantly in eliminating no. 3 seed Martina Navratilova Friday night, was helpless against the powerful 20-year-old Argentine.

"It may have looked like an easy match," Sabatini said after the 53-minute rout. "But I made it easy with the way I played."

Martinez, the world's eighth-ranked player, won just one game, holding her service in the first set after Sabatini had taken a 2-0 lead.

Looking lost and demoralized, the 19-year-old Spaniard drifted further and further out of the

match, just waiting for it to end so she could leave the court.

Her lackluster performance contrasted sharply with Sabatini's nearly flawless execution.

"I knew what I had to do, and my concentration was excellent, on every shot," said Sabatini. "And I just didn't make any mistakes."

Seles holds a 3-1 edge in her matches against Sabatini, but won their last three encounters.

The two players have never met on clay, a surface that Sabatini thinks might give her a slight advantage.

"The balls don't go as fast on clay," said Sabatini, who also has not lost a set this year in Rome.

"This might be good for me, if I play well. But it won't be easy, even on this surface."

Monica is playing very well, and she has produced some excellent results. I know that to win I'm going to have to vary my shots, and to play her deep.

Tomorrow is going to be a very tough match. And I'm looking to it.

Some sports may lose Olympic status

COPENHAGEN (R) — Some less popular sports are in danger of losing their Olympic status by the year 2000, International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch said Sunday.

Samaranch, attending the finals of the World Badminton Championships — a sport which make its Olympic debut next year — said if new sports were to be included at the games others would have to be dropped.

The IOC has set a maximum level of 10,000 athletes and 5,000 officials for the 1992 and 1996 games.

"It's very difficult to ask an organising committee to have more than 15,000 people in the Olympic village," he said.

"That means that in the future if we have to have new sports or events in the Olympic programme we have to withdraw some sports or some events that are now in the Olympic programme."

Asked if some sports were in definite danger of losing their Olympic status, Samaranch replied: "Yes."

He refused to be drawn on

which sports might be threatened, but said: "Maybe it is easy to know. They will be the sports that are less popular — which the people and the young people of today are not interested in practising (playing)."

Samaranch said the programme for 1996 would be fixed finally at the IOC meeting in Birmingham, England, next month.

Samaranch had good news for his hosts, the International Badminton Federation, who were up-

said that there was no mixed doubles in the 1992 and 1996 Olympic programmes despite its popularity among players and spectators.

The president said he would be asking the IOC programme commission to reconsider because no extra players were involved.

"In other racket games (at the Olympics) there are no mixed events. In some sports mixed events are not so important. Maybe badminton is different — maybe."

Any change would be operational for 1996, not Barcelona next year, and would also need the agreement of the Atlanta organisers, Samaranch said.

China wins men's and women diving competition

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida (R) — China's second level of divers won the men's three-metre springboard and the women's platform competition at the Alamo International Diving Championships Saturday.

With teammate and two-time Olympic silver medalist Tan Liangde sitting on the sidelines nursing two broken fingers from a basketball accident, unheralded Lan Wei, 23, won the men's S-metre springboard title.

Leading after the sixth round, Lan won with 655.65 points and sealed the victory on his final dive, holding off American Mark Bradshaw, 28, a three-time national champion. Bradshaw finished second with 650.82.

Recent FINA World Cup 3-metre gold medalist Mark Lenzi worked his way back from fifth in the ninth round to third, nailing his favourite dive, a reverse 3-1/2

somersault on his final dive.

Zhu Jinhong, 15, of Tianjin won the women's 10-metre platform finals and scored the meet's only 10 on her fifth dive, a reverse 2-1/2. Training mate and world champion Fu Mingxia, the meet's defending champion, was left home because at 12 she is too young to compete in last week's FINA World Cup.

The Soviet Union swept second and third places, with world championship silver medalist Elena Mirochina, 16, and Inga Afonina, 20.

The U.S. team's best finish was Ellen McGrath in fifth place. "I was not in top level today," Lan said. "It wasn't my best. I am not surprised I won because I train very hard. The U.S. is always a big challenge for us."

Zhu trains with Mingxia but has never competed against her. The 10 was her second in international competition.

Barcelona cancels victory parade after losing 4-0

MADRID (R) — Barcelona, hoping to clinch the Spanish League soccer title, had to cancel a planned victory parade after losing 4-0 at bottom club Cadiz.

The Catalans, convinced they would thrash the modest southern side, had prepared a lavish celebration on Barcelona's central Ramblas Avenue but called it off in a hurry.

Cadiz coach Ramon Blanco was delighted. "They spent all week preparing a big party to celebrate the title. I spent it preparing for the game and here's the result," he declared.

Barcelona, nine points clear of Atletico Madrid, will clinch the title they last held in 1985 if the second-placed club lose against Real Sociedad Sunday.

The last team to score four against the Catalans were Sevilla who won 4-3 in the Nou Camp 18 months ago.

Cadiz, struggling for the fifth consecutive year to avoid relegation, dominated the match. All four goals came through the right side of the defence, missing Nando Munoz.

Dutch coach Johan Cruyff had rested full back Munoz and Bulgarian striker Kristo Stoichkov ahead of next Wednesday's European Cup Winners' Cup final against Manchester United in Rotterdam.

Veteran midfielder Jose Mejias scored first after five minutes. Cadiz's Argentine striker Oscar Dertycia set up Jose Quevedo for the second in the 19th and then scored himself in the 33rd.

Quevedo was on target again three minutes after the break. Champions Real Madrid boosted their chances of a UEFA Cup place with a 4-1 home win over Athletic Bilbao.

Bayern Munich wins to stay in Bundesliga title race

BONN (R) — Second half goals by Jurgen Kohler and Stefan Effenberg earned Bayern Munich a 2-0 win over Eintracht Frankfurt and kept alive their German title hopes.

The champions were helped by league leaders Kaiserslautern, who were held to a 0-0 draw at lowly Wattenscheid.

Kaiserslautern have 41 points to Bayern's 38 points with five league games remaining.

The home win lifted Bayern into second place in the standings ahead of Werder Bremen, who

drew 0-0 away to St. Pauli in the other big Bundesliga match of the day.

"We have to win every match from now on," Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes told his team before the match.

Clearly under pressure, Bayern began cautiously and became bagged down in midfield for much of the first half.

But Kohler broke the stalemate with a goal in the 70th minute. Effenberg made it 2-0 three minutes from time.

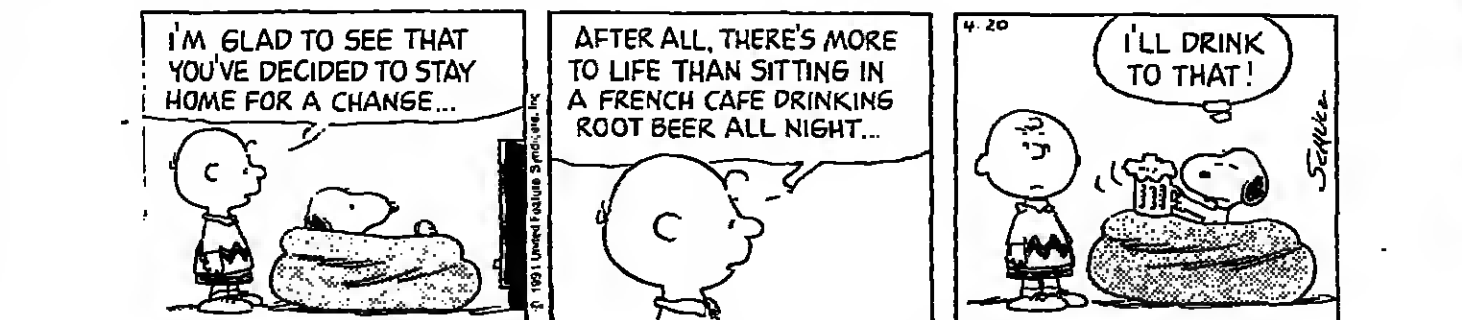
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♥ 8 7 4
♦ A J 9 8
♣ Void

EAST
♠ Q 10 6 4
♥ K J 9 8
♦ K 5
♣ Q 10 2

SOUTH
♠ Q 10 7 6 4
♥ K 8 5 3 2
♦ A K Q J 6 3
♣ 7 6 4 3

A J 9

The bidding:

South West North East

1 Pass 1 Pass

2 Pass 2 Pass

3 Pass 3 Pass

4 Pass 4 Pass

5 Pass 5 Pass

6 Pass 6 Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♠

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North-South bid well to reach slam. South's club cue-bid did not thrill North particularly; hence, the sign-off at five hearts. But there was no stopping South.

Unfortunately, South's play was not up to his bidding. After discarding a diamond on the ace of clubs, declarer drew trumps and elected to bank everything on finding West with the ten of diamonds together with a higher honor. A diamond to the nine lost to the ten, and the contract flew out the window.

The diamond holding was the last thing declarer should have touched, since that can be combined with the possibility of a 4-4 spade split. Correct technique is to ruff the opening lead in dummy, cash the ace of spades for a diamond discard and then ruff a spade. After a club and a spade ruff, declarer must trump the ace of clubs on the board for the key entry to ruff a third spade.

If the spades split 5-3, declarer draws trumps in two rounds and then has to fall back on finding a favorable diamond position. However, if the cards are as in the diagram above, there is now an established spade on the board. After drawing the trumps, declarer crosses to the ace of diamonds and discards another diamond on the long spade. The only trick for the defenders is a diamond.

Economy

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, MAY 13, 1991 7

Financial Markets

Jordan Times
In co-operation with
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U.S. Dollar in International Markets NEW YORK NEW YORK
New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	3/5/91	10/5/91	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.6935	1.7245	+1.83
Deutsche Mark	1.7495	1.7225	+1.57
Swiss Franc	1.4767	1.4545	+1.53
French Franc	5.9130	5.8225	+1.55
Japanese Yen	138.85	138.65	+0.14

USD Per STD

Euro-Currency Interest Rates

Currency	3/5/91	10/5/91	1-Month (%)	3-Month (%)	6-Month (%)	1-Year (%)
U.S. Dollar	5.87	6.50	5.81	6.50		
Sterling Pound	11.81	11.12	11.87	10.93		
Deutsche Mark	8.75	9.06	8.75	9.18		
Swiss Franc	8.31	8.00	8.25	7.93		
French Franc	9.06	9.18	9.00	9.18		
Japanese Yen	8.03	7.37	7.93	7.43		

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Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 12/5/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.679	.683
Sterling Pound	1.1688	1.1758
Deutsche Mark	.3938	.3962
Swiss Franc	.4662	.4690
French Franc	.1765	.1772
Japanese Yen	.4896	.4925
Dutch Guilder	.3497	.3518
Swedish Krona	.1099	.1106
Italian Lira	.0532	.0535
Belgian Franc	.0719	.0731

Per 100

Weekly foreign exchange market summary (May 6-May 10, 1991)

THE U.S. dollar fell in mostly subdued activity reaching its lowest levels during the week on Tuesday, then recovered slightly to end the week on Friday well below New York closing levels at the end of the previous week.

The dollar fell Monday in this Far Eastern and early European trading due to the absence of Tokyo and London traders on official holidays. The thin trading activity accentuated the drop caused by news of President Bush being hospitalized due to heart problems. It rallied later in New York trading just after Mr. Bush left the hospital, but failed to breach resistance at (1.75) marks triggered a round of profit-taking. The dollar subsequently closed at its highest levels during the week at (1.7312-22) marks, (138.20/30) yen and at (1.7105/15) dollars to the sterling pound.

The U.S. currency fell further Tuesday, after an early rally brought about by a statement from a Bundesbank council member who said that the Bundesbank had "no intention at the moment to raise interest rates." It fell later in the London and New York after a statement from the German economics minister rebuffed expectations of higher German interest rates. The minister was reported as saying that the Deutschmark's stability was "an absolute priority." Dropping through support at (1.72) marks, the U.S. unit fell to its lowest levels during the week to close in New York at (1.7155/65) marks, (137.80/90) yen and at (1.7270/80) dollars to the pound.

News that Iraqi anti-aircraft gunners fired at U.S. warplanes in northern Iraq lifted the dollar in Europe Wednesday. The currency advanced further due to short covering by European traders squaring positions ahead of the Ascension Day holiday on Thursday. New York trading was subdued Wednesday and Thursday in anticipation of the release of April's producer price index on Friday.

Friday witnessed a rise in the dollar against the yen in Tokyo, with dealers taking short yen positions on rumors that Bank of Japan officials held an emergency meeting to consider a discount rate cut. Despite Bank of Japan denials, the Japanese currency continued to slip later in the day, hitting European currencies along with the German unit against the dollar in New York, as dealers continued to take long mark-short yen positions in anticipation of a Japanese interest rate decline, or at least expectations that German interest rates will either rise, or at least remain flat in the short run. An early dollar rally in New York, after the release of producer price data showed a slight (0.2%) rise in April, soon lost steam. Observers maintained that the data was already discounted as it came well within market expectations.

Palestinians suffer unprecedented squeeze

RAMALLAH, West Bank (R) — As summer begins, unsold bottles are piling up in the warehouse of the RC soft drink company and jobs are being cut. For Palestinians, even a bottle of Cola has become a luxury.

"It's pathetic," said Suhail Jaddou, owner of the factory. "I have between 100 and 300 people applying every day, begging for jobs."

"I pay 720 shekels (\$310) a month for an unskilled worker," said the U.S.-educated industrialist. "They come in offering to take 380 shekels (\$165)."

There are no jobs. Sales by the bottling company, still among the biggest local employers with 155 workers after cutting 24 jobs, are dropping as the population becomes increasingly poorer.

A combination of rebellion, the Gulf war and Israeli policies have placed Palestinians in the worst economic squeeze since Israeli armour swept through the West Bank and Gaza Strip nearly 24 years ago.

Unemployment has soared and living standards are dropping. UNRWA, the United Nations agency that helps Palestinian refugees from the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, is now distributing basic food supplies to the entire Palestinian population.

"The situation now is worse than at any time in the past 40 or 50 years," said Samir Huleihel, an economist and member of the Economic Development Group that promotes investment in the occupied territories.

He estimated that only between 150,000 and 180,000 Palestinians of a population 1.75 million in the occupied territories still had jobs, a third of which were not regular workers. Unemployment last summer was 28 per cent — it may now be half the workforce.

The local General Federation of Trade Unions reports annual

gross national product has more than halved to \$1.2 billion since the start of the rebellion against Israeli rule.

The nationalist strikes and army curfews since the uprising began in December 1987 had already caused the economy to contract by about a third before Iraq invaded Kuwait last August.

The Gulf crisis and Palestinian support for Iraq meant an end to gifts from rich Arab patrons aligned against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and remittances from workers abroad who were losing their jobs.

The final blow came with the rising violence of the revolt. A series of stabbings of Jews after Israeli police killed 18 Arabs in occupied Jerusalem in October led to drastic cuts in the number of Palestinians allowed to work in Israel.

"There is so much hatred and fear," said veteran Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij. "There is a wall of hatred separating the two people."

Israel has instituted rigid controls over Palestinian entry into the area, including Arab East Jerusalem.

Only some 50,000 Palestinians now work in Israel compared with 120,000 last summer. Those allowed in — mostly older, married men — know employers want to replace them with recently arrived Soviet Jews.

As well as preventing Arabs from working, the measure has effectively split the West Bank in two since all major roads go through Jerusalem.

That was a final blow to Bethlehem, just south of Jerusalem. Its tourist industry had already collapsed — the murder of a French pilgrim on April 30 scared off the last visitors — and now few residents have a chance to earn a living in Israel.

"It could not be worse," Freij said in his office overlooking the



Elias Freij

Church of the Nativity, the traditional site of Christ's birth.

There was not a single tourist in view, explaining why some 400 local workshops, scores of restaurants and all but one family-run hotel had closed. Freij estimated local unemployment at 70 per cent.

Barring a dramatic political change, such as a breakthrough in U.S. efforts to start Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, the prospects for reversing the economic decline are slim. At best, conditions will stabilise at the current low level.

Israel looks unlikely to drop restrictions on Palestinian workers, and the flood of competing Soviet immigrants that abated during the Gulf war is expected to resume.

Saudi Arabia and smaller Gulf states, still angry at the Palestinian sympathy for Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, are unlikely to rehire Palestinians who worked there. Most of their donations may be permanently gone.

With explosive population growth, the streets of the occupied territories are filling with young men who have little chance of jobs at home and who are not allowed to work in Israel.

Arab leaders warn of the dangers to Israel from rising frustration. Some like Freij point to a sharp increase in local crime as the people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip sink deeper into poverty.

Sudanese swap banknotes in anti-inflation exercise

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudanese crowded banks Sunday to hand in old banknotes in a currency swap ordered by the government to stop people hoarding cash and to fight inflation.

Queues formed outside the central bank and other banks in Khartoum as people waited to exchange old notes for new ones.

Withdrawals are to be restricted to rein in excess cash. The government believes hoarding cash chasing scarce goods is one of the reasons for 200 per cent inflation.

Police were posted at the banks to prevent theft and banking hours were extended by six hours to cope with the rush.

The governor of the Bank of Sudan, the central bank, forecast inflation would fall because of the exercise.

"Many people used to keep a lot of money in the boots of their cars which they used to buy almost anything with at any time. Now they won't have that large amount of money available," he said.

"This will mean there will be goods in the market but little money to buy them with. This will lead to a drop in prices," Sheikh Sid-Ahmad told a news conference.

The governor said no one would be allowed to withdraw more than 5,000 Sudanese pounds (\$1,100) in cash during the first week of the exchange operation.

Amounts in excess of 5,000 pound will be deposited in the owners' accounts.

Sid-Ahmad said the measure was dictated by the poor economic plight of the country, which is ravaged by drought and faces acute hunger because of crop failure and civil war.

The country has a \$13 billion foreign debt and the International Monetary Fund has refused to lend it any more until it puts its house in order.

"In September last year 40 per cent of the money in the banks was lying idle with nothing to use it on so that banks refused to open new bank accounts. Now

the banks are asking me to provide them with cash because they have very little," he pointed out.

Sid-Ahmad said last week money being kept outside the banking system amounted to 17 billion Sudanese pounds (\$3.8 billion) while the banks possessed only two billion Sudanese pounds (\$440 million).

He said the U.S. dollar had already dropped by about 10 Sudanese pounds to 50 in the free market.

Most importers rely on this market for their hard currency needs and a drop in the dollar's value is often reflected in prices of consumer goods.

The change of 100-pound and 50-pound banknotes started Sunday throughout the country.

Sid-Ahmad said these large denomination notes, forming 84 per cent of the money in circulation, would no longer be valid as of next Saturday. Smaller notes remain valid.

Sudan's military ruler, General Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, ordered the currency change last week.

IMF backs Egypt's bid for debt cut

CAIRO (R) — The chairman of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said Sunday the IMF would back Egypt's efforts to persuade Western creditors to cut its foreign debt.

Michel Camdessus, speaking to reporters after a 90-minute meeting with President Hosni Mubarak, said the IMF would approve an accord on economic reform with Egypt this week but warned change would take years rather than months.

"I told the president that this very week the IMF executive board will approve this programme, and the week after we will go to the Paris Club and we will support the case of Egypt," he said.

The IMF standby credit accord, under often acrimonious negotiation for more than three years, is due to be signed in Washington Friday, opening the way to fresh credits from the West.

Members of the Paris Club of Western creditor nations have pledged to reduce Egypt's \$35 billion debt once an accord is signed and President Mubarak will make a five-nation European tour next week to try to get the best terms possible.

"Your country has a convincing programme and I think it will get strong and convincing support from the international community," Camdessus said.

"We believe this programme for the stabilisation of the Egyptian economy has all the potential for creating growth opportunities in your country," Camdessus said.

German Gulf funding puts balance of payments in record deficit

BONN (R) — Germany's contribution to the Gulf war pushed its current account balance of payments into a record deficit of 5.3 billion marks (\$3.1 billion) in March, the Federal Statistics Office has said.

But the trade balance, which does not include services and financial transfers to other countries, showed a small surplus of 2.8 billion marks (\$1.6 billion).

Economists said the recent trend towards declining exports and growing imports strengthened further in March.

For the full year the trade balance is expected to show a slight surplus but not large enough to offset transfers from Germany to other countries and international organisations.

Economists expect the current account to slip into the red in 1991 after a record surplus of 75.5 billion marks (\$43.6 billion) in 1990.

"We have moved into negative current account territory," said Jonathan Hoffman of Credit Suisse First Boston in London.

Germany's foreign trading pattern has changed dramatically

with last year's unification and the slowdown in many Western economies. Imports have surged to meet demand from former East Germany while exports have slipped as foreign orders from both western and eastern Europe have dropped.

In the first quarter of this year the overall German current account deficit rose to 8.9 billion marks (\$5.1 billion) while the trade balance showed a surplus of 6.8 billion (\$3.9 billion).

Although overall orders for German industry still remain very strong, foreign orders have dropped significantly.

A spokesman for the Bundesbank, Germany's central bank, said the current account was affected by a payment of 6.5 billion marks (\$3.7 billion) to the United States, Britain, France and Israel in connection with the Gulf war.

This pushed transfers to other countries in March into a deficit of 10.3 billion marks (\$5.9 billion), up from a normal shortfall of about three billion (\$1.7 billion).

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Soviet Union 'on verge of chaos' — Gorbachev

LONDON (AP) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, saying his country was "on the verge of chaos," warned that U.S. conservatives could push the superpowers into a new cold war. He also implied he could again tighten restrictions in the Soviet Union.

"Chaos can be easily created," Gorbachev said in an interview with the Sunday Times. "We are on the verge of chaos, because we are abandoning a command economy and because we are moving towards a situation where all the various actors will be free."

"If we stop the process, we could have to reimpose the command system."

His wife, Raisa, echoed his views.

"Now is the peak of tension," she said. "The storm is happening and Mikhail Sergeyevich is in the eye of the storm."

In an interview last week with Rupert Murdoch, chief executive of News International, which owns the Sunday Times, Gorbachev said that right wing Americans were seeking to put pressure on the Soviet Union, and were influencing American foreign policy.

(Former President Richard Nixon and (Nixon's Secretary of State Henry) Kissinger and (Former National Security Advisor Zbigniew) Brzezinski have become more active, because of the Gulf war and because of the difficult situation we have with perestroika. They think their time has come again," he said.

The Soviet system has liberalised under perestroika reforms.

"American farmers are being told that they cannot have credit for grain exports to us," he said.

"The United States has vetoed exports of computers to us. The right wing in America is not just trying to put pressure on us, it has succeeded in making changes in American policy."

He added, "if we allow the U.S.-Soviet relationship to deteriorate there will be a new cold war. Or at least rainy weather."

Gorbachev suggested that Japan was acting in part on American advice when it gave him a cool reception during his visit there last month. And he

criticised elements in the U.S. government which see the next U.S.-Soviet summit as a barometer of political power.

"The question asked in the United States is: Does the American president need a summit or does Gorbachev need it more? If such arguments inside the U.S. administration really reflect its attitude then it should think about it — better not to have a summit if only one side wants it."

"We and the United States are doomed to be tied together," he said. "Maybe the U.S. feels it does not need a strong Soviet Union — but we feel we need a strong United States. It is the guiding axis of international relations."

Suggestions that the Soviet Union adopt a purely Western-style free market economy are "stupid," he said.

"It is stupid to demand that the Soviet Union copy other countries' models. We will learn, but we will not copy. We will not fit any pattern."

The final economic system the Soviet Union adopts will be a "mixed" format, Gorbachev said. He expressed at best lukewarm enthusiasm for private ownership.

"People do not want to work in a factory whose owner has accumulated money in some unknown (the implication in Russian was 'dubious') way," he said.

"Privatisation should give people a share, a lease maybe, membership of a cooperative... in their factories. Small private properties might be allowed in trade."

Gorbachev also criticised the media fascination with "questions like: Is Gorbachev moving to the right or left or maybe he's moving backwards? They do not see that Gorbachev can go in only one direction... forward."

"Don't they see that any move back would be political death for Gorbachev? We cannot say how many more surprises we still have in store for history."

Responding to criticism that he is cracking down on the Soviet media, he said the press had to be "handled with great responsibility."

"The press can be quick to

report trends. But what is happening involves changes of such magnitude that it is bound to be accompanied by elements of chaos."

The Sunday Times reported that Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov was caustically critical of the brevity of Murdoch's visit with Gorbachev.

"You have come here so well briefed, I suppose, that you can afford to pay us so brief a visit," Pavlov said.

Yeltsin: Gorbachev is now an ally

Meanwhile, Russian Republic President Boris Yeltsin, who has had a long and bitter political feud with Gorbachev, now views the Soviet president as an "ally," a news agency reported Saturday.

The statement was a remarkable turnaround for Yeltsin, who only three months ago had called for Gorbachev's resignation on national television.

Yeltsin's apparent change of heart stems from an agreement reached April 23 between Gorbachev and the leaders of nine of the 15 Soviet republics, including Russia.

The independent Interfax News Agency quoted Yeltsin as saying that he is "ready to combine efforts with any republic and with the centre" to further pro-democracy reforms. The "centre" is a term used to mean the Soviet central government.

"Gorbachev today is clearly in favour of such reforms, which is very important and which makes him our ally," Yeltsin was quoted as saying by Interfax.

While acknowledging that his personal relationship with Gorbachev has been difficult, Yeltsin said the issue "must not overshadow the fact that we are the leaders of two state structures: Russia and the (Soviet) Union," according to Interfax.

"Unless we combine our efforts, the union may just fall to pieces," he was quoted as saying.

Yeltsin, a one-time Gorbachev protégé, was ousted from the politburo on Feb. 18, 1988, after the two split over the pace of reform. Yeltsin had advocated faster economic, social and political change than Gorbachev.



Mikhail Gorbachev

The feud has grown increasingly bitter over the years. It intensified after Yeltsin was elected as leader of the Russian Republic's parliament a year ago and dramatically quit the Communist Party in July.

Since then, the two have disagreed over policy between the central and republic governments and have been engaged in what former Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze described as a "war of presidents."

Yeltsin Monday was guardedly optimistic about recent agreements reached with the Kremlin.

"If the intentions expressed during the meeting and set out in the signed statement are in earnest, it can be said that the first big political step has been taken towards getting out of the deep crisis," Yeltsin had told the Russian legislature.

But in his remarks reported Saturday by Interfax, Yeltsin clearly also sought to defuse any criticism from radical reformers who may believe he made too many concessions to Gorbachev. Interfax denied that he suffered "a political defeat" in reaching the agreements with Gorbachev.

There has been some criticism among more radical coal miners who Friday ended a two-month strike that Yeltsin had betrayed them in the April 23 agreement, which urged an end to all work stoppages.

"No one went back on his positions," Yeltsin was quoted by Interfax as saying.

He also appeared to issue a warning to Gorbachev over the agreement.

"He who is the first to deviate from that document will be doomed," Interfax quoted Yeltsin as saying.

Cyclone threat, disease overwhelm Bangladesh

DHAKA (R) — The threat of a new cyclone hung over Bangladesh Sunday as the impoverished nation struggled to cope with flooding, hunger and disease in the wake of a storm which killed at least 138,000 people and made millions destitute.

Indian Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar suspended campaigning for elections at home to visit Bangladesh to offer his condolences.

According to official figures, 138,368 people were killed when a cyclone with 230 kph (145 mph) winds and a six-metre (20-foot) tidal wave hit Bangladesh's southern coast on April 29. Red Cross officials say the final figure could be well over 200,000.

Dhaka weather officials located a low depression in the Andaman Sea, 300 miles south of Chittagong, and feared it would turn into a new cyclone which could hit the country in the next two days.

"We don't want to take any chances. We have told people to stay alert," said Abdur Rub Khan, an official in Chittagong.

Shekhar, who met acting President Shahabuddin Ahmad and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia during his visit, said the situation was "horrendous."

India has lent six of the 11 helicopters Bangladesh has been flying to remote areas to drop food, medicine and cloth to destitute survivors of the cyclone.

"I have come here to share with you your grief and sorrows, your trial and tribulations," Shekhar told Bangladeshi leaders at the airport.

Finance Minister Saifur Rahman said the cyclone had cost Bangladesh \$3 billion in economic losses and nearly four million people had been rendered virtually destitute.

A 20-member advance team of a U.S. task force arrived in Dhaka Sunday to help relief operations.

In Washington, White House spokesman Bill Harlow said the task force would include helicopters, amphibious landing ships, construction workers and medical teams to help to set up water purification plants.

An official said 35 people drowned when floods engulfed at least 520 square kilometres of northeast Sylhet and Moulvi Bazar districts when six rivers burst their banks after heavy rains. Paddy fields and thousands of homes were inundated.

More than 305,000 people were marooned by the floods and officials said Moulvi Bazar town, with a population of half a million, would be submerged by waters from the Manu River if there was more rain.

The Dhaka Weather Office said rivers all over the country were still rising because of heavy rains in the upper Himalayan region in the north.

Voluntary agencies said diarrhoea had broken out in 16 coastal districts where people were drinking contaminated water. The government said it was sending more doctors to the area.

Bangladesh's Health Directorate said diarrhoea had killed 951 people in 23 districts in the past two weeks. Most of the deaths were in cyclone-affected regions.

Storms with 100 kph (60 mph) winds battered seven towns in northern and eastern Bangladesh Thursday night, destroying hundreds of mud houses and uprooting trees and electric pylons.

Amnesty: Khmer Rouge killed 30 in internal purge

BANGKOK (R) — The Khmer Rouge has executed 30 members who led a move for greater freedoms within the radical Cambodian group, Amnesty International said.

All were alleged to have been killed on the same day in July last year, the London-based human rights group said in a statement seen in Bangkok Sunday.

It said six were shot in their beds before dawn and the other 24 were taken into a forest and executed.

The victims had opposed restrictions on the means of livelihood, freedom of movement, contact with foreigners and practice of the Buddhist religion, Amnesty said.

Among the estimated one million people who died under Khmer Rouge rule in Cambodia from 1975-79, were thousands of party members killed in a frenzy of internal purges.

Ousted by Vietnamese troops in 1979, the Chinese-backed movement is the strongest army in the guerrilla alliance battling the Hanoi-backed Phnom Penh government.

The question of how much it has changed its policies is a central issue in the debate on ending the 12-year-old civil war.

Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan, who was Khmer Rouge head Pol Pot's right-hand

Actress regrets playing in Kennedy

NEW YORK (AP) — A surprise encounter with Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis convinced Blair Brown she'd made a mistake playing the former first lady in the 1983 miniseries Kennedy.

"One day I was shopping in New York, and there was Jackie, and I just hid," Brown says in this Sunday's parade magazine. "I didn't want to face her. Even now, I'm sorry I did that series. People deserve their privacy, and we ought to just leave them alone. Anyway, that's how I feel about it now — very protective of her," continues the star of The Days And Nights Of Molly Dodd. Brown was nominated for a Golden Globe Award for her portrayal of Jackie O.

2 stars make appearance: Madonna and the sun

CANNES (AP) — Two stars were given rousing welcomes to the Cannes Film Festival: Sultry singer-actress Madonna — and the sun. The sun blazed down on France's Mediterranean coast after hiding behind clouds and drizzles the first two days of the 44th annual filmfest. Bikini-clad bathers ventured out to the beaches of Cannes-Croisette, giving a lustful to hordes of amateur photographers in town to catch glimpses of cinematic luminaries such as Robert de Niro, Richard Gere, Gina Lollobrigida and Robert Mitchum. Meanwhile Madonna, who is attending the festival for Monday's premiere of her latest movie, Truth Or Dare: In Bed With Madonna, arrived in Nice and managed to avoid the media frenzy that generally accompanies her everywhere. Evading reporters and photographers at the Nice airport, she sped off to seclusion at the posh Hotel Du Cap in nearby Cap d'Antibes. Her film, the showing of which is expected to be a high point of the 12-day extravaganza, is not entered in competition. Moviegoers got down to the true business at hand at screenings of three films Saturday — the French Jaquot De Mantes, the Briefcase Carrier from Italy and the German entry Malina. Jaquot De Mantes, not entered in competition, is an homage to the late French film director Jacques Demy, who pioneered the genre of movie musical in Europe in the 1950s and 1960s. Demy, best known for his Les Parapluies De Cherbourg (The Umbrellas Of Cherbourg) which won the Cannes Festival's coveted Golden Palm Award in 1964, died last October. The film recounts Demy's childhood, filmed in the actual locations he grew up. Demy himself appears in parts of the film, along with clips from his movies.

Cruyff urges Catalans to stop smoking

BARCELONA, Spain (R) — Barcelona soccer coach Johan Cruyff, a chain-smoker until he required heart-by-pass surgery in February, is urging Spaniards to kick the habit in a television advertisement for the Catalan government. "I'm Johan Cruyff," he says in the Catalan-language advertisement. "In my life I have had two big vices: smoking and playing football. Football has given me everything in life, but smoking nearly took it all away." The 43-year-old former Dutch international then kicks a cigarette packet out of sight. Cruyff, who made the advertisement free of charge at the request of the doctor who treated him for a mild heart attack, said he now chews gum whenever he feels like a smoke. "The doctors said to me all the time 'if you smoke you will die,'" he said. "I am not stupid enough to carry on, knowing that. When I smoked I said it was to stop me being nervous, but it doesn't make any difference."

'Out of 10 Malaysians mentally ill'

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — About 1.7 million Malaysians or 10 per cent of the population suffer from mental illness and the number is rising, a Malaysian minister said Sunday.

"Stressed-out school children and teenagers are among those with mental problems," local newspapers quoted Deputy Health Minister Farid Ariffin as saying. "Young children have become deviant because they cannot cope with the pressures of education," he said. A national mental healthcare plan was being drawn up to check the illness, he said. Many parents say the country's increasingly exam-oriented school system is putting intense pressure on young children.

Nepalis rush to vote in first free polls

KATHMANDU (R) — Nepalis flocked to vote Sunday in the Himalayan kingdom's first free polls in 32 years, with liberals, Communists and monarchists vying for power.

Police sources contacted by telephone reported that voting had been disrupted and halted at three polling stations in separate districts of the southern Terai Plain.

They had few details but said the violence had been curbed without major casualties.

Elsewhere, police, officials and journalists around the country reported a rush to the polling booths, with around half the voters casting their ballots within three hours of the booths opening at 8 a.m. (0215).

There appeared great enthusiasm for the election promised for 18 months since King Birendra bowed to popular protest and agreed to surrender his absolute power to a 205-seat assembly.

"All are in joyous mood," said Interior Ministry official Thaneswar Prasad Koirala, watching orderly lines of voters fill the courtyard of a Hindu shrine-turned-poll booth across the road from the royal palace in Kathmandu.

But some police officials said people were voting early for fear of violence later.

Chhatra Pradhan, police chief of Kapilvastu district, near Lumbini on the Indian border, said "young voters came in the morning so they can go to other polling stations in the afternoon to support others."

Armenia fears economic blockade by Moscow

YEREVAN, Soviet Union (R) — Armenian Prime Minister Vazgen Manukyan said Sunday large-scale Soviet army raids on villages in the southern republic had practically stopped but again voiced fears that Moscow could enforce an economic blockade.

"There have been no serious military operations for most of the last two days. Some villages have been encircled briefly, but that is about all," he told a news conference in the capital Yerevan.

The Armenian Interior Ministry says Soviet troops raided several villages along the border with Azerbaijan over the past two weeks, killing at least 50 people and taking 104 hostages. The armed forces blame Armenian militants for the bloodshed.

Manukyan said Saturday that the republic was getting only a fraction of agreed food supplies from the centre and feared this could be a continuation of what he called a campaign by Moscow to destabilise the republic.

"Food supplies to all the republics have been poor this year, but in the last month deliveries to Armenia have dropped even further. To my mind this is linked to political goals," he told the news conference.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan said the Kremlin was trying to destabilise the republic because it was the first one which intended to secede legally from the Soviet Union.

"(President Mikhail) Gorbachev does not want a single republic to leave the union and will do all he can to interfere with the process," he said in an interview Sunday.

Armenia, unlike other break-away republics, has chosen to



leave the Soviet Union according to the country's constitution. This calls for a referendum on independence, followed by a five-year transition period and then another referendum.

The secessionist Baltic republics and Georgia earlier this year held referendums on independence in which overwhelming majorities voted to break links with Moscow.

"Those republics did not give six months notice before the referendum, as the Soviet constitution demands, and this very conveniently allowed Gorbachev to declare those polls invalid," Ter-Petrosyan said. "But in our case he cannot say that — we have given the required notice."

Armenia plans to hold its referendum on Sept. 21 this year. Gorbachev said it would be a disaster if the Soviet Union were to split apart and he wants the 15 republics to sign a new treaty redefining their relations with the centre. But he insists they will be allowed to go freely, so long as they follow the constitutional procedure.

The Kremlin claims the military actions in Armenia aim solely to disarm illegal armed groups in accordance with a decree from Gorbachev.

But Yerevan says the troops — working closely with Azeri police — want to deport Armenians from the area around the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, an enclave of Azerbaijan populated mainly by Armenians.

Ter-Petrosyan said Moscow was merely using Azerbaijan to further its own ends.

"What is happening now in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh is not a conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It is just pressure from the centre against our independence bid and nothing more," he said.

Pope visits historical island

FUNCHAL, Madeira (AP) — Pope John Paul II fulfilled a childhood dream Sunday when he stepped off on this luxuriant Atlantic island en route to the shrine of the Virgin of Fatima, who the Polish Pope believes contributed to the demise of Communist governments in Eastern Europe.

From an early age, Polish children learn the legend of 15th-century King Wladyslaw III, who is said to have taken refuge on Madeira.

Pope John Paul himself escaped death from the bullet of a Turkish gunman in St. Peter's Square in 1981 and has come to Portugal for the 10th anniversary of the assassination attempt to give thanks to the Virgin of Fatima.

Since the Virgin's apparition on a hill 110 kilometres north of Lisbon to three illiterate shepherds on May 13, 1917, the Roman Catholic Church has conducted frequent worldwide vigils and pilgrimages to pray for the return of Christianity to the atheist Soviet Union.

Voluntary agencies said diarrhoea had broken out in 16 coastal districts where people were drinking contaminated water. The government said it was sending more doctors to the area.

Bangladesh's Health Directorate said diarrhoea had killed 951 people in 23 districts in the past two weeks. Most of the deaths were in cyclone-affected regions.

Storms with 100 kph (60 mph) winds battered seven towns in northern and eastern Bangladesh Thursday night, destroying hundreds of mud houses and uprooting trees and electric pylons.

Thai troops occupy bases of heroin 'prince of death'

MONG TUEN, Burma (R) — Drugs warlord Khun Sa, said by the United States to be the world's biggest producer of heroin, is licking his wounds after a Thai army offensive on the fringes of his mountain lairs in the Golden Triangle.

Thai Rangers have occupied a string of hilltop forts after artillery barrages and helicopter attacks forced his men to abandon them and retreat into the forests of Burma last month.

The man branded the "prince of death" by his enemies was already locked in a bloody struggle with the rival Wa drugs army, which has been enlisted by a Burmese government seeking to divide and rule its troublesome minorities.

But Khun Sa aides say recent fighting has not cut routes used for transporting heroin from the Golden Triangle on the first stage of its journey to the streets of U.S. cities.

"Don't think this stops anything. There are so many supply routes," said a Khun Sa aide while relaxing at home in Chiang

Mai, nerve centre of the U.S. and Thai campaign to combat the drugs trade.

Sources on the other side of the drugs war said they, too, believed the wily Khun Sa had beaten a strategic retreat and was biding his time.

More than half the heroin seized in the United States comes from the Golden Triangle, where the border of Burma, Thailand and Laos meet.

Production in Burma of opium, from which heroin is derived, was 3,252 tonnes last year, according to U.S. figures.

Scanning the misty green hills from the abandoned command post at Mong Tuen, a Thai army colonel said: "We're here to stay."

"We took these bases in 1985 but left too quickly and they came back. Not this time."

The network of trenches and concrete bunkers is surrounded by fences of sharpened bamboo stakes.

At the centre is a pagoda inscribed with the words "for a peaceful country" — a reminder

that Khun Sa sees himself as a freedom fighter whose deadly trade is a means to finance the struggle for a free Shan state.

A Thai army base is just a short ride away by truck and the recent action was unexpected in an area where security forces and the warlord's men usually exchange pleasantries rather than gunfire.

U.S. officials have often accused some officials along the border of being somewhat less than enthusiastic in tackling their foe.

The latest State Department report on narcotics said corrupt officials were turning a blind eye to shipments crossing into Thailand.

During our visit, a few of Khun Sa's men were lounging in the village at the foot of the hill although their guns were out of sight.

The colonel, who asked not to be identified, said the army now regarded Mong Tuen as part of Thailand, not Burma. "So we cannot permit anyone to carry weapons," he said.

Back in Chiang Mai, Khun Sa aides were confident that the

Rangoon government would insist that the Thais withdraw.

"We have a policy of not attacking the Thais. But if they hand it over to any other group, that is, the Wa, we will have to take it back," said one.

Fighting was still going on inside Burma between Khun Sa's Mong Tai Army (MTA) and the Wa. It would have been much worse had the MTA not ambushed a Wa army convoy in March, they said.

Burmese government planes were making air strikes in the north of Shan state, they added.

A wounded MTA captain, Ai Kwok, said freelancing Thai Rangers had led the Wa into battle against the MTA in March and were paid 600,000 baht (\$24,000). He was shot in the thigh in a clash a few days later.

The MTA was willing to make peace with the Wa, another aide said.

"We regard them as our brothers and as our citizens. Besides, the cost of war is more expensive than the profits from narcotics."

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